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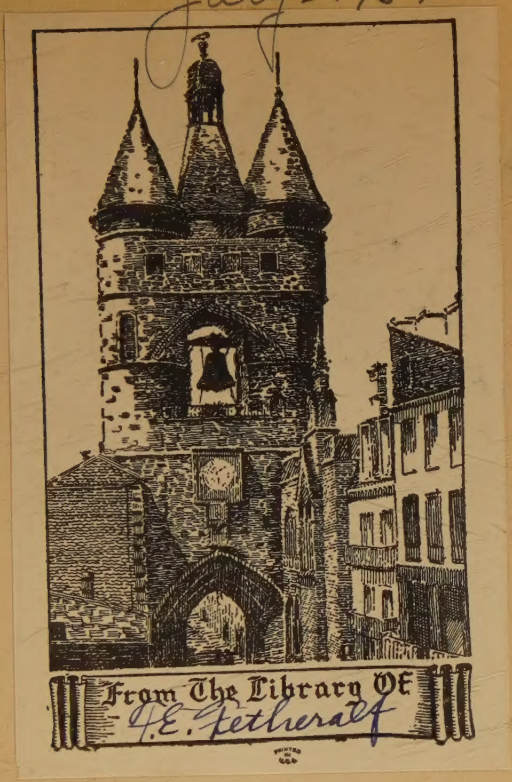

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JESUS AND THE GOSPEL

By REV. PROF. JAMES DENNEY

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THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION
OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

JESUS AND THE GOSPEL

CHRISTIANITY JUSTIFIED IN THE MIND OF CHRIST

BY

JAMES DENNEY

PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND THEOLOGY,
UNITED FREE CHURCH, GLASGOW

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PREFACE

THE Introduction to this book makes its purpose sufficiently clear, and a preface is hardly needed except to indicate the readers whom the writer would wish to reach.

The argument appeals, on the one hand, to those who are members of Christian Churches and to the Churches themselves. Amid the vast unsettlement of opinion which has been produced by the emancipation of the mind and its exercise on the general tradition of Christianity, it calls attention anew to the certainty of the things which we have been taught. It demonstrates, as the writer believes, that the attitude to Christ which has always been maintained in the Church is the one which is characteristic of the New Testament from beginning to end, and that this attitude is the only one which is consistent with the self-revelation of Jesus during His life on earth. But it makes clear at the same time that this Christian attitude to Jesus is all that is vital to Christianity, and that it is not bound up, as it is often supposed to be, with this or that intellectual construction of it, or with this or that definition or what it supposes or implies. The Church must bind its members to the Christian attitude to Christ, but it has no right to bind them to anything besides. It can

never overcome its own divisions, it can never appeal with the power of a unanimous testimony to the world, till both these truths are recognised to the full.

On the other hand, the argument appeals to those who are outside of the Churches, who do not take up the Christian attitude to Christ, and who on general philosophical grounds, as they would say, decline even to discuss it. To them it is simply an appeal to look at the facts. They have a place for Jesus in their world, but it is not the place which Christian faith gives Him. It is the hope of the writer that he may convince some that it is not the place which He claims. This is surely a serious consideration. The mind of Christ is the greatest reality with which we can come into contact in the spiritual world, and it is not treating it with the respect which is its due, if we decide beforehand, as so many do, that Christ can only have in the life and faith of humanity the same kind of place as others who are spoken of as the founders of religions. The section of the book entitled *The Self-Revelation of Jesus* is an attempt to bring out the significance which Jesus had, in His own mind, in relation to God and man. This can be done, as the writer is convinced, in a way which is historically unimpeachable; and unless we are prepared summarily to set aside Christ's consciousness of Himself, it is fatal to such appreciations of Him as have just been referred to. To be a Christian means, in one aspect of it, to take Christ at His own estimate; and it is one step to this to feel that He is putting the most serious of all questions when He asks, *Who say ye that I am?*

Much of the indifference to Christianity in certain circles comes from the refusal to treat this question seriously. It would fulfil the deepest desire of the writer if what he has said of the self-revelation of Jesus prevailed with any one who has regarded it as an unreal question to take it up in earnest, and to let the Christ who is historically attested in the gospels freely appeal to his mind, not as an illustration of some philosophical theorem of his own about God or Man, but as the Sovereign Person that He was and is.

The writer wishes to express his thanks to Messrs. T. and T. Clark for the use they have allowed him to make of an article on *Preaching Christ* contributed by him to their *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels.*

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN we open the New Testament we find ourselves in presence of a glowing religious life. There is nothing in the world which offers any real parallel either to this life, or to the collection of books which attests it. The soul, which in contemporary literature is bound in shallows and in miseries, is here raised as on a great tidal wave of spiritual blessing. Nothing that belongs to a complete religious life is wanting, neither convictions nor motives, neither penitence nor ideals, neither vocation nor the assurance of victory. And from beginning to end, in all its parts and aspects and elements, this religious life is determined by Christ. It owes its character at every point to Him. Its convictions are convictions about Him. Its hopes are hopes which He has inspired and which it is for Him to fulfil. Its ideals are born of His teaching and His life. Its strength is the strength of His spirit. If we sum it up in the one word faith, it is faith in God through Him—a faith which owes to Him all that is characteristic in it, all that distinguishes it from what is elsewhere known among men by that name.

This, at least, is the *prima facie* impression which the New Testament makes upon a reader brought up in the Christian Church. The simplest way to express it is to say that Christianity as it is represented in the New Testament is the life of faith in Jesus Christ. It is a life in which faith is directed to Him as its object, and in which everything depends upon the fact that the

believer can be sure of his Lord. Christ so conceived is a person of transcendent greatness, but He is a real person, a historical person, and the representations of His greatness are true. They reproduce the reality which He is, and they justify that attitude of the soul to Him which the early Christians called faith, and which was the spring of all their Christian experiences. This, we repeat, is the impression which the New Testament makes on the ordinary Christian reader, but it is possible to react against it. In point of fact, the reaction has taken place, and has been profound and far-reaching. Two main questions have been raised by it which it is the object of the present work to examine. The first is, How far is the description just given of the New Testament correct? Is it the case that the Christian religious life, as the New Testament exhibits it, really puts Jesus into the place indicated, and that everything in this life, and everything especially in the relations of God and man, is determined by Him? In other words, is it the case that from the very beginning Christianity has existed only in the form of a faith which has Christ as its object, and not at all in the form of a faith which has had Christ simply as its living pattern? The second question is of importance to those who accept what seems at a glance the only possible answer to the first. It is this: Can the Christian religion, as the New Testament exhibits it, justify itself by appeal to Jesus? Granting that the spiritual phenomenon is what it is said to be, are the underlying historical facts sufficient to sustain it? In particular, it may be said, is the mind of Christians about Christ supported by the mind of Christ about Himself? Is that which has come to be known in the world as Christian faith—known, let us admit, in the apostolic age and ever since—such faith as Jesus lived and died to produce? Did He take for

Himself the extraordinary place which He fills in the mind and the world even of primitive Christians, or was this greatness thrust upon Him without His knowledge, against His will, and in inconsistency with His true place and nature? We are familiar with the idea that we can appeal to Christ against any phenomenon of our own age which claims to be Christian; is it not conceivable that we may have to appeal to Him even against the earliest forms which Christianity assumed?

No one who is familiar with the currents of thought whether within or without the Church can doubt that these questions are of present and urgent interest. To some, indeed, it may seem that there are questions more fundamental, and that when men are discussing whether Jesus ever lived, or whether we know anything about Him, it is trifling to ask whether the apostolic faith in Him is justified by the facts of His history. No serious person, however, doubts that Jesus existed, and the second of our two questions has been stated in the most searching form conceivable. It raises in all its dimensions the problem of the life and mind of Jesus, and in answering it we shall have opportunity to examine fully the sources on which our knowledge of Jesus rests. For those who stand outside the Christian Church, this second question is naturally of greater interest than the other, yet even for them it is impossible to ignore the connexion of the two. For it is in the Church and through its testimony to Jesus that whatever knowledge we have of Him, even in the purely historical sense, has been preserved. But for those who are within the Church, the first question also has an interest of its own. To ask whether the *prima facie* impression which the New Testament makes upon us is verified by a closer examination —whether the interpretation of Christ which is current in the Church is that which is really yielded by the primi-

tive witnesses—is to ask in other words whether the Church's faith to-day is continuous with that of apostolic times; and there can be few Christians who are indifferent to the answer. But though the profession of indifference would be absurd, it is not absurd to aim at sincerity and truth. No one can be more anxious to know the truth than the man to whom it means a great deal that the truth should be thus or thus. If we could imagine a person to whom it was a matter of indifference whether the Christian Church of to-day understood rightly or wrongly what the New Testament means by Christian faith, or who did not care in the least whether the historical facts about Jesus justified that faith or not, we should have imagined a person not ideally competent but absolutely incompetent to deal with either the one question or the other. The writer does not wish to disguise the fact that he is vitally interested in both, for he is convinced that on no other condition is there any likelihood of the true answer being found. But he disclaims at the same time any 'apologetic' intention. There is no policy in what he has written, either in its manner or its substance. Nothing, so far as he is conscious, is set down for any other reason than that he believes it to be the truth, and nothing is to be discounted or allowed for as though he were mediating or negotiating between the progressive and the stationary elements in a Christian society, and would have said more or less if he had been free to speak without reserve. To the best of his knowledge he speaks without reserve, and has neither more nor less to say. This does not exclude the intention and the hope to say what may be of service to Christian faith and to the Christian Church; all it excludes is the idea that Christian faith or the Christian Church can be served by anything else than simple truth.

The two questions with which we have to deal are

in one important respect of very different character. The first is quite simple: Is the conception of the Christian religion which prevails and has always prevailed in the Church borne out by the New Testament? As we know it, and as it has been known in history, the Christian life is the life of faith in Jesus Christ: is this what it was in primitive times? Does the New Testament throughout give that solitary and all-determining place to Jesus which He holds in the later Christian religion? This is a simple question, and no difficulty can be raised about the proper method of answering it. All we have to do is to go to the New Testament and scrutinise its evidence. The laws of interpretation are agreed upon among intelligent people, and no difficulty about 'presuppositions' is raised. But the second question is of a different kind. It has to do with what is historically known of Jesus, and here the difficulty about 'presuppositions' becomes acute. It is possible to argue that much of what the New Testament records concerning Jesus *cannot* be historically known—that it transcends the conception of what is historical, and must either be known on other terms than history, or dismissed from the region of knowledge altogether. It is not necessary at this stage to raise the abstract problem; when we come to the second question it will be considered as far as the case requires. Here the writer would only express his distrust of *à priori* determinations of what is possible either in the natural or the historical sphere. There is only one universe: nature is not the whole of it, neither is history; and neither nature nor history is a whole apart from it. Nature and history do not exist in isolation; they are caught up into a moral and spiritual system with which they are throughout in vital relations. It is not for anyone to say offhand and *à priori* what is or is not naturally or historically conceivable in such a system. Its possi-

bilities, in all likelihood, rather transcend than fall short of our anticipations; we need not be too much surprised if experience calls rather for elasticity than for rigidity of mind. If anything is certain, it is that the world is not made to the measure of any science or philosophy, but on a scale which perpetually summons philosophy and science to construct themselves anew; and it is with the undogmatic temper which recognises this that the problems indicated above are approached in this book.

BOOK I

CHRISTIANITY AS IT IS EXHIBITED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

BOOK I

CHRISTIANITY AS IT IS EXHIBITED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION

It has been said above that in the New Testament we are confronted with a religious life in which everything is determined by Christ, and the question we have to consider is whether this is really so. Is there such a thing as New Testament Christianity, a spiritual phenomenon with a unity of its own, and is this unity constituted by the common attitude of all Christian souls to Christ?

The instinctive answer of those who have been brought up in the Christian faith is in the affirmative. They cannot doubt that New Testament Christianity is one consistent thing. They are equally at home in all parts of the New Testament; they recognise throughout in it the common faith, the faith which gives Jesus the name which is above every name. This instinctive assurance of the unity of the New Testament is not disturbed by even the keenest sense of the differences which persist along with it. Criticism is a science of discrimination, and the critical study of the New Testament has had the greater part of its work to do in bringing into relief the distinctions in what was once supposed to be a uniform and dead level. The science of New Testament theology, if it is a science, has defined the various types of primitive teaching by contrast to one another; it has taught us

to distinguish Peter and Paul, James and John, instead of losing them in the vague conception of 'apostolic.' Even the reader who is not a professional student is aware of the distinctions, though he has no temptation to press them. He is conscious that the dialectical discussions of Galatians and Romans are profoundly unlike the intuitive and contemplative epistles of John. When he reads the first verses of Hebrews or of the Fourth Gospel he becomes aware that he has entered a new intellectual atmosphere; this is not the air which he breathes in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. That new method of study known to Germans as the 'religionsgeschichtliche Methode,' which regards the Christianity of the New Testament as a supreme example of religious syncretism, and by the help of the science of comparative religion traces all the elements of it to their independent sources, of course still further emphasises the differences. To it, Christianity is a stream which has its proximate source in Jesus; but as the stream flows out into the world tributaries pour into it from every side, swelling, colouring, sometimes poisoning its waters. This process does not begin, as we have perhaps been taught to believe, when the New Testament closes, so that we have the New Testament as a standard for the perpetual restoration of the true faith: it begins at the very beginning. The New Testament itself is the earliest witness to it, and it is the New Testament itself which we must purge if we would get Christianity pure and undefiled. All the sacramentarianism, for example, which we find in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; all the nascent catholicism of Acts and the Pastoral Epistles; all the religious materialism which in one form or another connects itself with the Church and its ministry, has to be explained and discounted on these lines. It cannot be traced to Christ, and therefore it is not Christian; it can

be traced to other sources, and when we know what these are we understand it, and can rate it at its true value. It is not necessary to discuss this method of study here. Its right is unquestioned, and, though like all new things it is apt to go to some heads with intoxicating power, it has brought light to a few dark places in the New Testament, and has doubtless more to bring. The point at present is that it emphasises certain differences which exist in the New Testament, differences which (it asserts) may amount to a direct contradiction of essential Christian truth.

No one, it will be admitted, can deny that the New Testament has variety as well as unity. It is the variety which gives interest to the unity. The reality and power of the unity are in exact proportion to the variety; we feel how potent the unity must be which can hold all this variety together in the energies of a common life. The question raised by every demonstration of the undeniable differences which characterise the New Testament is, What is the vital force which triumphs over them all? What is it in which these people, differing as widely as they do, are vitally and fundamentally at one, so that through all their differences they form a brotherhood, and are conscious of an indissoluble spiritual bond? There can be no doubt that that which unites them is a common relation to Christ—a common faith in Him involving common religious convictions about Him. Such at any rate is the opinion of the writer, and it is the purpose of the following pages to give the proof of it in detail. Everywhere in the New Testament, it will be shown, we are in contact with a religious life which is determined throughout by Christ. Be the difference between the various witnesses what they will, there is no difference on this point. In the relations of God and man, everything turns upon Christ and upon faith in Him. There

is no Christianity known to the New Testament except that in which He has a place all His own, a place of absolute significance, to which there is no analogy elsewhere. We do not raise here the question whether this is right or wrong, whether it agrees or does not agree with the mind or intention of Christ Himself—this is reserved for subsequent treatment: all we are at present concerned with is the fact. It is not assumed, but it will appear as the unquestionable result of the detailed examination, that Christianity never existed in the world as a religion in which men shared the faith of Jesus, but was from the very beginning, and amid all undeniable diversities, a religion in which Jesus was the object of faith. To all believers Jesus belonged to the divine as truly as to the human sphere. In the practical sense of believing in Him they all confessed His Godhead. This is the fact which we now proceed to prove and illustrate.

I

CHRIST IN PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN PREACHING

Our investigation of the evidence naturally begins with the accounts of the primitive Christian preaching in Acts. Fortunately for our purpose we have no critical questions to encounter here. Even those who hold with Renan that the early pages of Acts are the most unhistorical in the New Testament make an exception in favour of the passages with which we are concerned. 'Almost the only element,' says Schmiedel,[1] 'that is historically important (in the early chapters of Acts) is the Christology of the speeches of Peter. This, however, is important in the highest degree. . . . It is hardly possible

[1] *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 42.

not to believe that this Christology of the speeches of Peter must have come from a primitive source.' Perhaps what it is most important to notice is that from the very beginning there really is a Christology. The question which Jesus put to His disciples while He was with them, Whom say ye that I am? was one which they could not help putting to themselves. If we hold that the Son, properly speaking, has no place in the gospel, but only the Father, then the question is a misleading one; it sets the mind off spiritually on a wrong track. This seems, in spite of ambiguities, to be the conviction of scholars like Harnack, who thinks that Christology is a mistake, and would lighten the distressed ship of the gospel by throwing it overboard.[1] He goes so far as to censure the primitive Church for turning aside from its proper duty—teaching men to observe all things that Jesus had commanded—to the apologetic task of proving that Jesus was the Christ.[2] Our present question, we repeat, is not whether Peter and the other early preachers fulfilled their calling well or ill, but what it was that they actually did, and of this there can be no doubt. Their own relation to Jesus, as we see it in Acts, depends finally upon His Resurrection and His gift of the Spirit; and though these may be said in a sense to transcend history, they do not lie beyond experience. Peter had seen the Risen Jesus and received the Holy Spirit: in virtue of these experiences, Jesus had a place in his life and his faith which belonged to Him alone. He was both Lord and Christ, and there was nothing in the religious world of the apostle that was not henceforth determined by Him. It is this religious significance of Jesus, rather than the Christology of Peter, in the strict sense of the term, which it is our purpose to exhibit.

The apostle starts in his preaching from the historical

[1] *Das Wesen des Christentums*, 79 f. [2] *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 57 f.

person of Jesus, and appeals to his hearers to confirm what he says: 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by miracles and portents and signs which God wrought through Him, as you yourselves know' (Acts 2 [22]). We cannot tell what precisely was the significance to Peter of the wonderful works of Jesus, which are here assumed to be matter of common knowledge; the expression 'a man approved of God' is somewhat indefinite, and need not mean that Jesus was demonstrated by these works to be the Messiah. In point of fact, the characteristic of this primitive Christianity is not the belief that Jesus *was* the Christ, but the belief that He *is* the Christ. He was while on earth what all men had seen and known—a man approved of God by His might in word and deed; He is now what the preaching of the apostles declares Him to be—both Lord and Christ. This preaching is not, indeed, independent of the historical life of Jesus. When a man was chosen to take the place of Judas, and to be associated with the eleven as a witness of the Resurrection, he was chosen from the men 'who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that He was received up from us' (Acts 1 [21 f]). The criticism which would have us believe that from the Resurrection onward the Jesus of history was practically displaced by an ideal Christ of faith is beside the mark. The Christ of faith was the Jesus of history, and no one was regarded as qualified to bear witness to the Christ unless he had had the fullest opportunity of knowing Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus is demonstrated to be the Christ and is preached in that character, not merely or even mainly on the ground of what He had said and done on earth, but on the ground of His exaltation to God's right hand, and His gift of the Holy Spirit. It is in this exaltation and

in this wonderful outpouring of divine life that He is seen to be what He is, and takes the place in human souls which establishes the Christian religion.

The Christ, of course, is a Jewish title, and it is easy to say impatient or petulant things about it. There are those who profess devotion to Jesus and tell us that they do not care whether He was (or is) the Christ or not; those who thank God, not without complacency, that to them He is far more and far better than the Christ; those who assure us that Christianity is a misnomer, and that our religion should find a more descriptive name. Such superior persons betray a lack of historical discernment, and it is wiser on the whole to accept the world as God has made it than to reconstruct it on lines of our own. The conception of Jesus as the Christ, if we interpret it by the teaching of Peter in the early chapters of Acts, is not one which it is easy to disparage. It embodies at least two great truths about Jesus as the apostle regarded Him. The first is that Jesus is King. That is the very meaning of the term. The Christ is the Lord's Anointed, and the throne on which He has been set in His exaltation is the throne of God Himself. It is a translation of this part of the meaning of the term into less technical language when Peter says elsewhere: 'Jesus Christ, He is Lord of all' (Acts 10[36]). Simple as it is, this assertion of the sovereignty of Jesus covers all that is characteristic in historical Christianity. If it disappeared, all that has ever been known to history as Christianity would disappear along with it. It belonged to Christian faith from the beginning that in it all men should stand on a level with one another, but all should at the same time confront Christ and do homage to Him as King. The second truth covered and guarded by the conception of Jesus as the Christ is this: that He is the Person through whom God's Kingdom comes, and

through whom all God's promises are fulfilled. In this sense the name is a symbol of the continuity of the work of God, and a guarantee of its accomplishment. This is the historical importance of it. 'To Him bear all the prophets witness' (Acts 10 [43]). All prophecy is in essence Messianic. All the hopes which God has inspired in the hearts of men, whether by articulate voices in the Old Testament, or by the providential guidance of the race, or by the very constitution of human nature, must look to Him to be made good. To borrow the language of Paul, 'How many soever are the promises of God, in him is the Yea' (2 Cor. 1 [20]). They must be fulfilled in Him, or not at all; or rather we should say, They have been fulfilled in Him, and in no other.

The exclusive place which is thus given to Jesus as the Christ is insisted upon from the first. Whether we regard Him as the King to whom all must do homage, or as the central and supreme figure in history, through whom God's final purpose is to be achieved, He stands alone. There cannot be another, who shares as He does the throne of God; there cannot be another to whom all the prophets bear witness, and on whom all the hopes of humanity depend. This is not only implied in the place taken by Jesus in the faith of the apostle; it has come to clear consciousness in the apostle's mind, and is explicitly asserted in his preaching. 'In none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved' (Acts 4 [12]). If we can rely upon these words as representing the mind of Peter—and the writer can see no reason to question them—it is clear that Jesus had in the earliest preaching and the earliest faith of Christians that solitary and incommunicable place which the Church assigns Him still.

It is worth while, however, to bring out more distinctly

the spiritual contents which the apostle found in his Christ. For those to whom he preached there was a hideous contradiction in the very idea that one should be the Christ who had died the accursed death of the Cross, and in so far as Peter's sermons are apologetic they deal with this difficulty. He meets it in two ways. On the one hand, the death of Jesus was divinely necessary; He was delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God. The evidence of this divine necessity was no doubt found in the Scriptures (Acts 2^{23}; 1 Cor. 15^{3}); and when we notice that in describing the death of Jesus Peter twice uses the Deuteronomic phrase 'hanged upon a tree,' which to Paul was the symbol of Christ made a curse for us (Acts 5^{30}, 10^{39}; Deut. 21^{23}; Gal. 3^{13}), it is perhaps not going too far to suggest that the atoning virtue of Christ's death was an idea as well as a power in the primitive Church. But however that may be, it is certain that the difficulties presented by His death to faith in the Messiahship of Jesus were practically annulled by His Resurrection and Exaltation. It was this which made Him both Lord and Christ, and in this character He determined for the apostles and for all believers their whole relation to God. To Him they owed already the gift of the Holy Spirit; and the gift of the Holy Spirit, Peter argues elsewhere, is the sufficient and final proof that men are right with God (Acts $11^{15\,17}$, 15^{8}). To His coming again, or rather to His coming in His character of the Christ, they looked for times of refreshing, nay for the consummation of human history, 'the times of the restoration of all things whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been from of old' (Acts 3^{21}). Much stress has been laid on the eschatological aspects of the primitive faith in Jesus as the Christ, and they are not to be ignored; but neither may we ignore the spiritual char-

acter of the salvation which men owe here and now to the Christ who is to come. 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2 [38]). Remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit: these are the present religious experiences which are offered to men through faith in the 'eschatological' Christ. But these are supremely gifts of God, and we do not appreciate truly the place of Christ in the apostle's faith until we see that where salvation is concerned He stands upon God's side, confronting men. The most vivid expression is given to this in Acts 2 [33]: 'Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath poured forth this which ye see and hear.' There can be no doubt that in this passage Peter looks upon Jesus in His exaltation as forming with God His Father one Divine causality at work through the Spirit for the salvation of men. His humanity is not questioned or curtailed; it has been spoken of without prejudice in words which immediately precede. But His relation to those experiences which constitute Christian life is that of being their Author, the Divine Source from which they come; he is not to Christian faith a Christian, but all Christians owe their being, as such, to Him. We may have any opinion we please about the rightness or the wrongness of this, but it is not possible to question the fact. We may argue that the history of the Church, like that of the human race, began with a fall—that the apostolic belief in the Resurrection was a mistake, and the spiritual experiences which accompanied it morbid phenomena to be referred to the mental pathologist; but even if we do, we must admit that primitive Christianity gave Jesus in its faith the extraordinary place which has just been described. He is the Christ,

the Prince of Life, Lord of all, Judge of the living and the dead, at God's right hand, the Giver of the Spirit, the fulfiller of all the promises of God. He is not the first of Christians or the best of men, but something absolutely different from this. The apostles and their converts are not persons who share the faith of Jesus; they are persons who have Jesus as the object of their faith, and who believe in God through Him.

II

CHRIST IN THE FAITH OF PAUL

There is an idea abroad that it does not much matter what Paul thought of Christ, because he never knew Him. He had not that acquaintance with Him during His public ministry on which, as we have seen, stress was laid in choosing a successor to Judas; his Christ, therefore, cannot but have been an ideal and theological rather than a real person. He has even been charged, on the ground of a difficult expression in one of his epistles (2 Cor. 5^{16}), with disparaging the kind of knowledge to which importance was attached in Jerusalem, and much of the modern criticism of his theology really assumes with the Pharisaic Christianity of Acts that he lacked the indispensable qualifications of an apostle. We even find scholars like Gunkel congratulating themselves on this ground that Paul's influence speedily waned.[1] It would have been all over with Christianity as a beneficent historical force if the synoptic gospels had not come to the front and established an ascendancy in the Church which to a great extent neutralised the Pauline gospel. If the question before us were, What

[1] *Die Wirkungen des heiligen Geistes*, 56.

did Paul know of Jesus of Nazareth? it would not be difficult to reduce these assertions to their true proportions. Paul did not live in a vacuum; he lived in the primitive Christian society in which all that was known of Jesus was current, and he could not, by the most determined and obstinate effort, have been as ignorant of Jesus as he is sometimes represented to be. Among his most intimate friends and fellow-workers, at different periods of his life, were Mark and Luke, the authors of our second and third gospels. There is much to be said for the idea of Mr. Wright,[1] that they worked as catechists in the Pauline Churches. Is it conceivable that the apostle did not know what they taught, and did not care? If this reasoning seems too *à priori*, or too much based on mere probabilities, to carry conviction, it only needs such a searching examination of the apostle's writings as Feine's *Jesus Christus und Paulus* to raise it beyond doubt. Paul was in no sense ignorant of Jesus. If our synoptic gospels are not works of imagination, but a genuine deposit of tradition—and this is the only view which is represented by serious scholars—then the substance of them must have been as familiar to Paul as it is to us.

In view, however, of the question which we are discussing, Paul's knowledge of Jesus is beside the mark. Whether he knew Jesus or not, whether his influence on Christianity has been pernicious or not, he is the most important figure in Christian history. He did more than any of the apostles to win for the Christian religion its place in the life of the world, and he has done more than any of them in always winning that place again when it seemed in danger of being lost. Evangelical revival, in personalities so powerful as Luther, Wesley, and Chalmers, has always been kindled afresh at the flame

[1] *The Composition of the Four Gospels*, cc. i. and ii.

which burns inextinguishable in his testimony to Christ. Hence, quite apart from any question as to its justification or otherwise, nothing can be of more consequence than to ascertain the place which Christ actually filled in the faith and life of the apostle. Was He to him what we have seen Him to be in the faith of the primitive Church?

In one respect at least, the answer cannot be doubtful. Paul's Christian life began with the appearance to him of the Risen Saviour; to him, as to Peter, in virtue of His exaltation the crucified Jesus was both Lord and Christ. With the splendour of that appearance present to his mind Paul calls Jesus the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2 [8]); to acknowledge Him in this character is to make the fundamental Christian confession in which all believers are united (1 Cor. 12 [3]; Rom. 10 [9]). It is often said that whatever doctrinal differences may be detected in the New Testament, there is no trace of Christological disputes. It is not quite clear that this is the case, nor is it clear that it must be so. It may quite fairly be argued from such a passage as 2 Cor. 1 [19]—Now *God's* Son—'God's' has a strong emphasis—who was preached among you by *us*, I mean by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay—that Paul was acquainted with preachers of another stamp than himself and his friends, whose Jesus was not in his sense God's Son, but perhaps only the son of David. There is something, too, to support this in 2 Cor. 11 [4], where we hear of 'another Jesus,' which means a 'different spirit' and a 'different gospel.' But, however this may be, it is certain that the Risen Jesus fills the same place in the religion of Paul as in that of Peter. To both apostles He is Lord and Christ. To both He is exalted at God's right hand. In the faith of both He comes again to judge the living and the dead. It is of Him that both say, with that great and

terrible day in view, 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved' (Acts 2 [21]; Rom. 10 [13]). If Peter cries to the Jews, 'There is not salvation in any other' (Acts 4 [12]), Paul writes to the Gentiles, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. 3 [11]). The absolute religious significance of Jesus, in all the relations of God and man, is the specific quality of the new faith as it appears in both.

The place Paul has filled in the history of Christianity justifies us in showing with some detail how this absolute religious significance of Christ pervades and dominates his spiritual life.

Sometimes it comes out quite casually, where, as we might say, he is not specially thinking about it. Thus in the salutations of his epistles he habitually wishes the churches grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 1 [7]; 1 Cor. 1 [3]; 2 Cor. 1 [2]; Gal. 1 [3], etc.), or he writes to them as societies which have their being in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 1 [1]; 2 Thess. 1 [1]). This is exactly parallel, in the place it gives to Jesus, to what we have already seen in Acts 2. Paul would not think any more than Peter of questioning the real and complete humanity of Jesus; but when he thinks of the grace and peace by which the Church lives, he does not think of Jesus as sharing in them with himself; he sets Him instinctively and spontaneously on the side of God from whom they come. If the Father is the source, Christ is the channel of these blessings; the Father and the Son together confront men as the divine power to which salvation is due.

Sometimes, again, the place Christ has in Paul's faith comes out in a single word; for example, when in 1 Cor. 15 [28] he calls Him without qualification 'the Son.' This passage, in which the apostle tells us that when the end comes the Son Himself shall be subject to Him who put

all things under Him, that God may be all in all, is sometimes cited to justify minimising or disparaging views of Christ's place, but nothing could be more inept. The person here spoken of has already brought to nought 'every principality, and every authority and power.' He has put all His enemies under His feet. He has destroyed death. He has fulfilled all the purposes and promises of God. All that God has designed to do for men, He has now done through Him as Messianic King, and the ends of His Kingship being achieved Christ hands over the kingdom to His Father. But that does not touch the fact that these ends have been achieved through Him, and that they can be achieved through no other. What other could do what Christ is here represented as having done for men? What other could hold the place in the apostle's mind which He holds? What other could be called *simpliciter* 'the Son'? The handing over of the kingdom to the Father does not compromise the solitary greatness which is conveyed by this name; it leaves the Son in that incomparable place which is suggested by His own solemn words in Mark 13 [32].

The religious attitude of Paul to Christ is made plainer still by the passages in which he involuntarily or deliberately contrasts Him with men. Thus in defending his apostleship to the Galatians he speaks of himself as an apostle who did not owe his calling to a human source nor get it through a human channel, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead (Gal. 1 [1]). The last words show that when he mentions Jesus Christ it is the Risen Lord he has in view, and nothing could bring out more clearly than the broad contrast of this sentence how instinctively and decisively Paul sets the Risen Christ side by side with God the Father in contrast to all that is human. That is his place in the Christian religion. He is not in any sense one of those

who have been or are being saved; he is included in the divine causality by which salvation is accomplished. It would never have occurred to Paul to deny that Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified at Jerusalem was true man, but however he may have reconciled this with his faith as a Christian, that faith indubitably put Jesus into the sphere of the divine. The apostolic calling which came to Paul through him was not a calling of man, but of God, and the same holds of all the experiences which the apostle owes to Christ. Another illustration of this may be given. 'What is Apollos? What is Paul?' the apostle asks, rebuking the party spirit at Corinth. 'Ministers through whom ye believed, and each as the Lord gave to him.' The Lord here, as always in Paul, is Christ, and is directly contrasted with His most distinguished servants. It is in the same spirit that the apostle exclaims, 'Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?' The idea which he here takes for granted is that the name of Jesus is an incomparable, incommensurable name. We can compare Paul and Apollos if we please; we can say that one planted and the other watered, though the apostle does not look on the making of such comparisons as a very profitable employment. But we must not compare Paul and Christ. They are not, like Paul and Apollos, members of one class by the ideal of which they can be judged. They are not teachers of religion, whether in rivalry or in partnership, who can equally be criticised through the idea of what religious teaching ought to be. This view is quite common in modern times even among men who profess to preach the Christian religion, but it is not the view of Paul. The very idea of it shocked him. His own relation to the Church, or that of Apollos, was in no way analogous to that of Christ. No doubt if he and Apollos had refused or renounced Christianity, the

Church would have missed them, but their places could have been supplied. The Church would have been there though they had been wanting, and the Lord who Himself gives the apostles and prophets and evangelists would have raised up others for His work. But without Christ there would be no Church, and no ministry at all; everything that we call Christian is absolutely dependent on Him. From this side, again, therefore, we see the unique place which Christ filled in the faith of Paul.

This exclusive and divine significance of Christ is even more conspicuous when we look at the two great religious controversies which engaged the apostle's mind in his earlier and later years, and brought his faith to articulate and conscious expression. The first is that which has left its most vivid record in the Epistle to the Galatians, and which is described from a greater distance and with less passion, perhaps less appreciation of all that was involved, in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. What was really at stake was the essence of Christianity. All who were Christians, Paul and his Pharisaic opponents alike, in some sense believed in Christ; the question was whether for perfect Christianity anything else was required. The Pharisaic Christians said Yes. The Gentile faith in Christ was very well as a beginning; but if these foreign believers were to be completely Christian and to inherit the blessings of the Messianic kingdom on the same footing with them, their faith in Christ must be supplemented by circumcision and the keeping of the Mosaic law. Paul said No. Christ is the whole of Christianity—Christ crucified and risen. He is the whole of it on the external side, regarded as the revelation and action of God for the salvation of sinful men; and faith in Christ—that abandonment of the soul to Him in which Paul as a Christian lived and moved and had his being—is the whole of it on the internal side. Anything that compromises this simple

and absolute truth, anything that proposes to supplement Christ on the one side or faith on the other, is treason to the gospel. It strikes at the root of Christianity, at the absolute sufficiency of grace in God and of faith in man to solve the problem of salvation; it denies the glory of Christ and destroys the hope of sinners. This is how Paul conceived it, and it is this, and not any personal intolerance of opposition, which prompts the solemn vehemence of Gal. 1 [8]: Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. The interest of the words for us is the force with which they bring out the absolute and unshared place which Christ filled in the religion of Paul. His faith in Christ was such that it admitted of no other object; Christ completely filled his religious horizon; his whole being, as a spiritual man with a life toward God, depended upon and was determined by Christ alone. And for this view, which he was perhaps the first to think out in clearness and simplicity, Paul was able to command the assent of the apostles who had been admitted to the intimacy of Jesus. James, Cephas, and John gave him and his fellow-worker Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

It is essentially the same religious question which is raised in another form in the second great controversy of the apostle's life—that to which we are introduced in the Epistle to the Colossians. The law appears here also, but the real danger now is not that of supplementing Christ by ritual observances, but that of dispensing with Him, to a greater or less extent, in favour of angelic mediators. Paul's attitude in this new situation is precisely what it was in Galatians. Christ is all, is the burden of his argument. We do not need to look anywhere but to Him for that knowledge and presence of God on which salvation depends; in Him are all the

treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden away; in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Once more it may be repeated that we are not dealing with the truth or falsehood of these views, with the possibility or impossibility of justifying them, but only with the fact. This is how Paul unquestionably thought of Jesus: this is indubitably the place which Jesus filled in his religious life. It is not putting it too strongly to say that He had for Paul the religious value of God. To suppose that Paul could have classified Him, and put Him in a series along with other great men who have contributed to the spiritual elevation of the race, is to deride his sincerity and passion. In the religion of the apostle, Jesus held a place which no human being could share. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the First and the Last.

Although we are not concerned with the Christology of the apostle, in the strict sense of the term, but only with the significance which Christ had for his faith, it will exhibit that significance more clearly, and so contribute to our purpose, if we look at the principal ways in which he seems to have conceived Christ. In a sense, this is entering the region of doctrine rather than of faith, but it is not with a doctrinal purpose; what we wish is to see through the doctrine what Christ was in the life of Paul. There are three distinguishable forms in which Christ is present to the mind of the apostle, and in different ways the same religious conclusion can be drawn from all.

(1) The simplest way to conceive Christ is that which regards Him as an individual historical person, practically contemporary with Paul himself; one who had lived and died in Palestine, and been familiarly known to many who were yet alive. No doubt Paul often thought of Him in this light; it would be impossible for any one

in those days to think otherwise. But there was always one immense qualification of this 'purely historical' view. Paul never thought of Christ, and could not think of Him, except as risen and exalted. Christianity may exist without any speculative Christology, but it never has existed and never can exist without faith in a living Saviour. It is quite possible that there was a stage in his Christian life when Paul had asked no theological questions about Jesus of Nazareth whom God had made by His exaltation both Lord and Christ. It is quite possible that he received the Holy Spirit and the apostolic commission and preached the gospel with divine power and blessing, before he had asked any question about the nature of Christ, or His original relation to God or to the human race, or about the mode in which the historical personality originated in which he now recognized the only Lord and Saviour. It is not his speculative Christology, if we are to call it such, which secures for Christ His place in Paul's religious life; Christ holds that place by another title, before the speculative Christology appears. The importance of that Christology lies not so immediately in itself as in the testimony it bears to the immense stimulation of intelligence by the new faith. If we look, for example, at the Epistles to the Thessalonians, we find no trace of Christology in the technical sense. There is an entire absence of speculative construction or interpretation of the Person of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is simply the historical person, known to Paul's contemporaries, who had been put to death by the Jews, and whom God had raised from the dead. There is not a word about pre-existence, or the incarnation, or an eternal relation to to God, or a universal relation to men. Yet the person who is thus simply conceived is one on whom Christians are absolutely dependent; as all men live and move and have their being in God, so Christians live and move

and have their being in Christ. The Church of the Thessalonians is a church in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; the grace and peace which are the sum and the fruit of all the divine blessings it enjoys come to it from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 1 [1]; 2 Thess. 1 [1 f.]). And this co-ordination of Christ with the Father, this elevation into the sphere of the divine in which Christ and the Father work harmoniously the salvation of men, is not a formality of salutation: it pervades the epistles throughout. Every function of the Christian life is determined by it; the place of Christ in the faith and life of Christians can only be characterised as the place of God, not of man. St. Paul has confidence *in the Lord* toward the Thessalonians (II. 3 [4]); he charges and entreats them *in the Lord Jesus Christ* (II. 3 [12]); they stand *in the Lord* (I. 3 [8]); he gives them commandments *through the Lord Jesus* (I. 4 [2]); church rulers are those who are over them *in the Lord* (I. 5 [12]); the Christian rule of life is the will of God *in Christ Jesus* concerning them (I. 5 [18]); the Christian departed are *the dead in Christ* (I. 4 [16]); all benediction is summed up in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (I. 5 [28]; II. 1 [12], 3 [18]); Jesus and the Father are co-ordinated as the object of prayer (I. 3 [11]), and prayer is directly addressed to the Lord, *i.e.* Christ (I. 3 [12]). Our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we are to obtain salvation at the great day, is He who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him (I. 5 [10]). It is as though all that God does for us He does in and through Christ, so that Christ confronts us as Saviour in divine glory and omnipotence. We may trust Him as God is trusted, live in Him as we live in God, and appeal to Him to save us as only God can save; and this is the essentially Christian relation to Him. It is what we found before in the primitive preaching of Acts; it is

what we find in Paul when his theology is at its simplest, and where the Christology of his later epistles gives no indication of its presence.

(2) The impression made upon us is not altered when we pass to that more developed mode of conceiving Christ which is characteristic of the second group of the apostle's writings—the controversial epistles of the third missionary journey, Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. Of course the non-theological way of presenting Christ is also to be found in these, as in all Paul's letters; he could not but think of Him often simply as the historical person whom God had exalted to be Lord of all. But along with this there is the conception of Christ as a representative, typical, or universal person, who has for a new Christian humanity the same kind of significance which Adam had for the old. Sometimes it is the *nature* of this Person on which stress is laid; he is a *spiritual* man, and belongs to heaven, as opposed to Adam, who was a natural (psychical) man, and of the earth earthen (1 Cor. 15 $^{45\ ff.}$). Sometimes the stress is laid not on his nature, but on his *action*; it can be characterised by the one word *obedience*, as opposed to the disobedience or transgression of Adam; and like the disobedience of the first man, the obedience of the second is of universal and absolute significance. It is the salvation of the world (Rom. 5 $^{12\ ff.}$). This is the conception which lends itself most readily to what are usually called 'mystical' interpretations of Christ's life and work. What is most important in it is the truth which it embodies of the kinship of Christ with all mankind, and the progressive verification of that truth which comes with the universal preaching of the gospel. Paul was convinced of the representative character of Christ and of all His acts; the death that He died for all has somehow the significance that the death of all would itself

have; in His resurrection we see the first fruits of a new race which shall wear the image of the heavenly man. It may indeed be said that any man is kin to all humanity, but not any man is kin in such a sense that men of all races can find their centre and rallying-point in Him. The progress of Christian missions is the demonstration in point of fact that Christ is the second Adam, and while His true humanity is asserted in this, as it is taken for granted everywhere in the New Testament, it leaves Him still in a place which is His alone. When Paul thinks of Christ as the second Adam, he does not reduce Him to the level of common humanity, as if He were only one more in the mass; on the contrary, the mass is conceived as absorbed and summed up in Him. It is not a way of denying, it is one way more of asserting, His peculiar place.

(3) The same may be said with even greater confidence of Christ as He is presented to us in the later Epistle to the Colossians.[1] We have here to do not with a historical individual whom God has exalted—not with a representative or universal person who is Man rather than one particular man—but with a person who can only be characterised as eternal and divine. When Jesus is represented as the Christ, it is as though He were explained by reference to the history of Israel; as the second Adam, he can be understood only when the reference is widened to take in the constitution and fortunes of the whole human race; but in the later mind of Paul there is something more profound and far-reaching than either. It is not possible to do justice to Jesus until we realise that in Him we are in contact with the eternal truth and being of God. This is the burden of the Epistle to the Colossians. What comes to us and acts upon us in Christ is nothing less than the eternal truth of God's being and character; it is not adequately

[1] See also 1 Cor. 8^6.

explained by thinking of Israel or by thinking of humanity, but only by thinking of God. The Jesus Christ of the apostle's faith was indeed an Israelite after the flesh; He was true and complete man, born of a woman; but the ultimate truth about Him is that in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and that we are complete in Him. There is not anything that can be understood if its relation to Him is ignored. All that we call being, and all that we call redemption, must be referred to Him alone; this is the divine way to comprehend it. In Him were all things created, and it pleased the Father through Him to reconcile all things to Himself (Col. 1 and 2).

These are overwhelming ideas when we think of Jesus of Nazareth, a Galilean carpenter, who had not where to lay His head, and reflect that they have to be associated with Him. The intellectual daring of them is almost inconceivable; imagination fails to realise the pressure under which the mind must have been working when it rose to the height of such assertions. Yet the seriousness and passion of the apostle are unquestionable, and the writer can only express his conviction that the attempts made to explain what may be called the Christology of Colossians by reference to Philo are essentially beside the mark. At the utmost, they help us to understand a casual expression here and there in Paul; they contribute nothing to the substance of his thought. Christ was not a lay figure that Paul could drape as he chose in the finery of Palestinian apocalyptic or of Alexandrian philosophy. He was the living Lord and Saviour, and if we can be sure of anything it is that in what the apostle says of Him there is nothing merely formal, nothing which has the character of literary or speculative borrowing, but that everything rests on experience. If Christ had been to Paul only a name in

a book, a name which he might use as a philosophic symbol or plaything, we might set a higher value upon the Philonic or other explanations which are sometimes offered of the Christology of the Epistle to the Colossians; but when we consider what Christ really was to the apostle, such explanations become meaningless. Paul was not a philosopher like Philo, baffled by the difficulty of connecting the spiritual God and the material universe, and finding the solution of his ever-recurring problem in the idea of the Logos, an idea which in some unexplained, not to say incomprehensible, way he was led to identify with Christ. The relation of God to the world had no more difficulty for him than for Amos or Isaiah; the God in whom he believed was not the philosophical abstraction of Philo, but the living God of the Bible, who made the world and who acted in it as He pleased. Paul did not transfer to Christ the attributes of the Logos, he did not make Him divine or half-divine, that he might provide an answer to speculative difficulties about the relation of God to the world of matter. The process in his mind was the very reverse. He was conscious in his experience as a Christian that what he came in contact with in Christ was nothing less than the eternal truth and love of God; it was the very reality which God is, the revelation of His eternal being in a human person, the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2 [9]). It does not matter whether 'bodily' means 'incarnate as man,' or 'in organic unity and completeness' as opposed to partial or imperfect revelation. The point is that Paul was conscious of meeting *God* in Christ. Here, he felt, he touched the last reality in the universe, the *ens realissimum*, the ultimate truth through which and by relation to which all things must be defined and understood. Paul does not, in writing to the Colossians, invest Christ in a character and greatness which

have no relation to His true nature, merely to stop a hole in his philosophy. On the contrary, the presence of God in Christ—His presence in the eternal truth of His being and character—is for Paul the primary certainty; and that certainty carries with it for him the requirement of a specifically Christian view of the universe. He would not be true to Christ, as Christ had revealed Himself to him in experience, unless he had the courage to *Christianise* all his thoughts of God, and the world. And this is what he is doing in the Epistle to the Colossians. He is not directly deifying Christ, he is Christianising the universe. He is not exhibiting Christ as divine or quasi-divine, by investing Him in the wavering and uncertain glories of the Alexandrian Logos; he is casting upon all creation and redemption the steadfast and unwavering light of that divine presence of which he was assured in Christ, and for which the Alexandrians had groped in vain. There is nothing in Paul more original, nothing in which his mind is more profoundly stimulated and his faith in Christ more vitally active, than the Epistle to the Colossians; and no greater injustice could be done him than to explain the significance which he here assigns to Christ by pointing to the alien and formal influence of a feeble dualistic philosophy, or to strike out of the epistle, as some would do, the very sentences which are the key to the whole.[1] If there is anything in Paul's writings which is his very own, born of his own experience, his own reflection, the necessities of his own thought, it is the conception of Christ as an eternal or divine person characteristic of this epistle.

Here again, therefore, we find our previous observation of the New Testament confirmed. Christ has a place in the faith of Christians which is without parallel elsewhere. But while we must not fail to recognise this,

[1] See Von Soden, *Hand Commentar*, iii. 32 f.

we need not misunderstand it. It is misunderstood, for example, by Wernle when he says that the consciousness of God must have been weakened in Paul before he could have said of Christ the things which he says in Colossians.[1] Christ, in other words, practically displaces God in this epistle; the Jewish sneer is almost justified which represents Christians as teaching that there is no God, but that Jesus is His Son. But Christ does not displace God; it is in Christ alone that Paul gets that assurance of God, and of his eternal truth and love, in which he lives, and in the light of which he cannot but interpret all things. Nothing that he says justifies the Jewish sneer: what it does justify is the truly evangelical remark of Dr. Chalmers—'I find that without a hold of Christ there is no hold of God at all.'[2] In truth, what we have in Colossians is only another assertion of the absolute significance of Christ for Christian faith. It is consciously pursued, no doubt, in its consequences further than elsewhere, but it is the same thing. A person of absolute significance—an eternal person—a person to whom in one way or another the idea of finality attaches: all these are indistinguishable. If we say that Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, we represent His absolute significance in one way; it is eternity for the imagination. If we say that He is the final Judge of all, on whose decision their destiny depends, we represent His absolute significance in another way; it is eternity for the conscience. But imagination and conscience have not rights in human nature which can be denied to the intelligence or speculative faculty; and it is to this last, and not merely to imagination and conscience, that Paul interprets in Colossians the abso-

[1] *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, 205: 'Die paulinische Gnosis geht hier von einem sehr lebendigen Gefühl des Christlichen aus, aber zugleich von einem gänzlich toten Gottesbegriff.'

[2] Hanna's *Life*, ii. 448.

lute significance of the Lord. It is not our business at this point to consider whether or not he can be justified in doing so by appeal to Jesus Himself, but it seemed necessary to say what has been said because the question of justification cannot be fairly raised until there is agreement upon what he has actually done.

In several passages of Paul's writings there is a conception of Christ which to most readers will seem akin to that which we have been discussing, but which is in truth much more difficult to apprehend—the conception of Him as pre-existent. The one difficulty which haunts theological thinking everywhere, the difficulty or rather the impossibility of defining the relation of time to eternity, is peculiarly felt here. Is an eternal person rightly or adequately thought of as a person existing before all things, or is the idea of pre-existence an imperfect means of representing eternity in the form of time—an idea, therefore, which is bound to lead to inconsistencies and contradictions? When Paul speaks of the pre-existence of Christ, is he carrying out in this inadequate form his own conviction, based on experience, that Christ is a person in whom the eternal truth of God has come into the world, and who, therefore, belongs to God's eternal being? Or is he simply applying to Him the common Jewish belief that the Messiah existed with God before He appeared among men? It is not easy to say: even if we admit the inadequacy of an idea like pre-existence to represent the eternal significance of Christ, and see no reason to doubt that current Jewish beliefs made this inadequate representation easier to the apostle, we must admit that in the most characteristic passages in which he uses it (2 Cor. 8^{9}; Phil. $2^{5\,ff.}$) it has been thoroughly Christianised. Judged by the Christian knowledge of God's revelation in Christ, the act by which the eternal person, conceived as pre-

existent, enters into the world of time, is a characteristically divine act. It is one in which the eternal truth of the divine nature—that God's name is Redeemer from of old, and that He humbles Himself to bear us and our burdens (Isa. 63 [16]; Ps. 68 [19])—is conspicuously revealed. In itself, the idea of pre-existence is harder to understand and to appreciate than that of eternal reality and worth; but even those who find it, abstractly considered, least congenial, must admit that in its Pauline applications it is in thorough harmony with the mind of Christ. Our interest in it here, however, need not carry us further; its application to Christ, and to Him alone, is only a final indication of the incomparable place He fills in the faith of Paul.

What has now been said is conclusive, and yet it makes practically no reference to the one signal proof Paul's writings afford of the unique and incommunicable place Christ held in his faith. That proof is afforded by what the apostle teaches of the meaning and power of Christ's death. This is not the place to enter into an exposition of this: it is sufficient to refer to the fact. He died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we might live together with Him (1 Thess. 5 [10]). Paul delivers to men first of all that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; this is the divinely laid foundation of the gospel (1 Cor. 15 [3]). He died for all, so then all died—their death was somehow involved and comprehended in His; Him, who knew no sin, God made to be sin on our behalf, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5 [14-21]). In His crucifixion He became a curse for us (Gal. 3 [13]). God set Him forth as a propitiation, through faith, in His blood; when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rom. 3 [25], 5 [10]). In Him we have our redemption, through His blood, even the forgiveness

of our trespasses (Eph. 1 7). So it runs through the epistles from beginning to end. There is no other person of whom such things can be said, or who can claim even to have some part of them extended to him when they are said of Christ. They are all for Him and for Him alone. They make it impossible to dispute the fact that Christ held a unique place in Paul's faith, and they make us feel deeply that this unique place was held by Christ in virtue of something which made Paul infinitely his debtor.

What has now been said hardly needs to be summarised. Whether the apostle was right or wrong; whether he was impelled by his experience as a Christian, or prompted by reminiscences of pre-Christian, Messianic theology, and extra-Christian Alexandrian philosophy, there is no doubt about the place he gave to Christ. Look at it as we will, it was a place which no man could share. Christ determined everything in the relations of God and men; but this, though it is central, is only the starting-point. All things whatsoever have to be determined by relation to Him; in Him alone is the key to their meaning to be found. All nature, all history, all revelation and redemption, all that is human and all that is divine, can be understood only through Him. The universe has to be reconstituted with Him as its centre, the principle of its unity, its goal. To understand the world is to discover that it is a Christian world—that spiritual law, the very law in which Christ lived and died—pervades the constitution of nature and the history of man. There is not in the history of the human mind an instance of intellectual boldness to compare with this, and it is the supreme daring of it which convinces us that it is the native birth of Paul's Christian faith. No one ever soared so high on borrowed wings.

III

CHRIST IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

When we pass from Paul, it is open to us, in view of the chronological and other uncertainties regarding the books of the New Testament, to take them in almost any order. The Epistle to the Hebrews, while it has affinities with almost all types of Christian thought—with the synoptic gospels and the early chapters of Acts, with Paul and with the Judaism of Alexandria—nevertheless stands alone in the New Testament. It is the most solitary of the primitive Christian books. In its presentation of Christ we might almost say that extremes meet. On the one hand, it is the most humanitarian of apostolic writings. It speaks with a kind of predilection of Jesus, not the Christ; it recalls 'the days of His flesh,' when, with strong crying and tears, He offered prayers and supplications to Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear; it holds Him up to us as a pattern of faith, the ideal subject of religion, who was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin; who passed through a curriculum of suffering by which He was made perfect for His calling, and who learned in doing so what it is to obey; who lived the life of faith in God from beginning to end, and is in short the typical believer. All this touches the heart of the reader as it no doubt moved the writer of the epistle, but it does not disclose to us the full significance of Jesus for His own faith. The most humanitarian book of the New Testament can also be fairly described as the most theological. Jesus is not only the pattern of true piety, but everything in the relations of God and men is determined by Him. He is

the mediator of a new covenant; to Him we owe the bringing in of a better hope through which we draw near to God. It is the virtue of his priesthood and sacrifice which consecrates us as a worshipping people, and by annulling sin makes it possible for us to live in fellowship with the most holy. The sentence with which the epistle opens gathers up all this and more in one sublime period. 'God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they.' The absolute significance of Jesus is here presented from every point of view. Whether we think of God and His self-revelation in Israel's history, or of the final consummation to which all things are tending, or of the creation and maintenance of the world in which we live, or of the atonement for sin which makes access to God possible for us, we must think of Christ. He is the key to the ultimate problems in all these regions. His place and worth in religion are incommensurable with the place and worth of any other beings, human or angelic: the final truth has been revealed; the final, because the perfect, religious relation to God has been established and is maintained through Him. Two of the characteristic words of the epistle serve to bring this out. One is 'better' (*κρείττων*), which the writer uses when he compares Christ and Christianity with other religions and their representative figures; the other is *αἰώνιος*, by which

he conveys the idea that Christ and Christianity are final, and that there is in truth no ground for comparisons. Thus Christ is 'better' than the angels (1 [4]); in Christianity there is the introduction of a 'better' hope (7 [19]); Jesus has become surety and mediator of a 'better' covenant, established upon 'better' promises (7 [22], 8 [6]); the heavenly sanctuary into which He has entered with His own blood must be purified with 'better' sacrifices than the earthly (9 [23]); the blood of sprinkling—the blood which Jesus shed—speaks 'better' things than that of Abel (12 [24]). This is as though the writer said to men attracted by the old religion, Do not bring it into comparison with what we owe to Christ; it cannot stand it. But when he uses *αἰώνιος*, eternal, to characterise the new dispensation in its various aspects, he means more. It is not only that the earlier form of religion with which he had to reckon is surpassed by that which looks to Jesus, but that the latter can never be surpassed. It is the eternal, final, perfect form of man's relation to God; in the strict sense of the term it is incomparable; and it depends for its very being on Christ, and on our faith in what He is and has done for us. It is in this conviction that he speaks of the 'eternal' salvation of which Christ is author to all who obey Him (5 [9]); of the 'eternal' redemption which He won by His own blood (9 [12]); of the 'eternal' spirit—the final revelation of divine love—through which He offered Himself without spot to God (9 [14]); of the 'eternal' inheritance promised to those who hear His voice (9 [15]); of the 'eternal' covenant established in His blood (13 [20]). When we recognise what these expressions mean, we see that for the writer of this epistle Christ has the same absolute religious significance which He has for Paul. It is not possible, on the ground of the prominence which he gives to the true humanity and the genuine religious experience of

Jesus, to argue that for him Jesus was only another man like himself, a perfect pattern of piety indeed, but no more; in his religion—in all that affected his relation as a sinful man to God—Jesus had a place and work which belonged to Him alone. All that God had done for the salvation of men He had done in Him; nay, all that He could ever do. For beyond that offering of Himself which Jesus had once made through the eternal spirit, there remains no more any sacrifice for sin (10[26]).

IV

CHRIST IN THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

The Catholic epistles, which were the last of the early Christian writings to secure a place in the canon, are often taken to represent an average type of Christianity, without the sharp edges or the individuality of view which we find in Paul, John, or the writer to the Hebrews. It this were so, they might be more important as witnesses to the place of Jesus in Christian faith than the writings of the most original intellects in the Church; for, as Mr. Bagehot says of politics, it is the average man who is truly representative. But the writer cannot agree with this estimate of the Catholic epistles. If for critical reasons we leave Second Peter out of account, it would be hard to imagine writings with a more distinct stamp of individuality upon them than James, Jude, and John. Even the First Epistle of Peter, influenced as it undoubtedly is by modes of thought and turns of phrase which have their most characteristic expression in Paul, is a document which no sympathetic reader could ascribe to the apostle of the Gentiles. It is the work of another mind, a mind with distinct qualities and virtues of its own; and in view of the overwhelming attestation of its author-

ship, there is no sufficient reason, either in its Pauline affinities or in its supposed references to one or another form of legalised persecution, to deny it to Peter. The early chapters of Acts have already shown us the place which Jesus held in the faith and life of His chief apostle, and the impression they leave is confirmed by all we find in the epistle. It emphasises as they do the resurrection of Jesus, and the expectation of His return. It calls on Christians to sanctify Christ as Lord in their hearts (3^{15}), thus applying to Him words which in Isaiah are applied to Jehovah, just as Peter in Acts similarly applies to Jesus words which refer to Jehovah in Joel (Acts 2^{21}). The new life of Christians and their hope of immortality are due to Christ's resurrection (1^{3}), and all that they know as redemption from sin has been accomplished by Him ($1^{18\,f.}$, $2^{21\,ff.}$, 3^{18}). The difficult passage extending from 3^{18} to 4^{6}, about preaching to the spirits in prison and bringing the gospel to the dead, has at least thus much of undisputed meaning in it: there is no world, no time, no order of being, in which the writer can think of any other salvation than that which comes by Christ. In His universe Christ is supreme, angels and principalities and powers being made subject to Him (3^{22}). In the salutation of the epistle Christ stands side by side with the Father and the Spirit; and just as in Acts 2^{33} and in various Pauline passages (*e.g.* 1 Cor. 12^{4-6}, Eph. 2^{18}), the three confront man as the one divine causality on which salvation depends. The foreknowledge of God the Father, consecration wrought by the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, these represent the divine action in the salvation of men (1^{2}). But probably the most decisive expression in the epistle, as bringing out the significance of Jesus for the religion of the writer, is that which he employs in $1^{20\,f.}$ to describe the Christian standing of its recipients: you, he says,

who through Him are believers in God. He does not mean that they did not believe in God before they believed in Christ; there was true faith in God in the world before there was Christian faith. But although it was true, it was not faith in its final or adequate form: that is only made possible when men believe in God through Christ. The final faith in God owes its *differentia*, that which makes it what it is, its specific and characteristic qualities, to Him. The God in whom the Christian believes is the God who is Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God who gave Him up for us all, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, and who has called us to this eternal glory in Him. There could not be such faith in God, or faith in such a God, apart from the presence of Jesus, His atoning death, and His exaltation to God's right hand; it is only as we believe thus in Jesus that we can have the new Christian faith in God. Jesus is not to the writer one of us, who shares a faith in God which is independently accessible to all men; He is the Person to whom alone the Christian religion owes its character and its being; God would be a word of another meaning to us but for Him. It does not seem to go in any way beyond the truth if we say that with the fullest recognition of what Jesus was and suffered as a man upon earth, the risen Lord, in whom the writer believes, stands on the divine side of reality, and is the channel through which all God's power flows to men for their salvation.

V

CHRIST IN THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

The Epistle of James was long one of the *cruces* of New Testament criticism. It was regarded by many

and is still regarded by some as the earliest of the canonical books; by others it is regarded as among the latest, if not the last of all—a writing which was only in time to secure admission to the canon before the door was shut. It says little, comparatively, about Christ, and the place which He fills in the life of the Christian, and this has been used to support both opinions about its age. It is argued, on the one hand, that it agrees with an early date at which Christological ideas were but little developed; and, on the other hand, that it agrees with a decidedly later date, when Christianity was thoroughly settled in the world, and was distinguished by its moral temper rather than by any peculiar relation to a person. It is not easy to assent to either argument. It is not Christological ideas which we are in quest of, or which the apostolic writings anywhere provide; and from the very earliest times, as our examination of Peter's speeches in Acts has shown, the place of Christ in Christian life was central and dominant. In spite of the inevitable difference in an epistle which is not missionary nor evangelistic but disciplinary, we venture to hold that it is so here also. The writer introduces himself as a bond-servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ. The co-ordination of God and Christ in this passage, and the choice of the term δοῦλος to denote the author's relation to God and Christ, are alike remarkable. Again, when he wishes to describe the Christian religion in the most general terms, he calls it 'the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ' (2 [1])—that is, the faith of which He is the object. We cannot be certain in this passage how the writer means us to take the words τῆς δόξης; they may be in apposition with 'our Lord Jesus Christ,' who would then be Himself the glory, the manifested holiness and love of God; or, as the English version has it, and as seems on the whole

more likely, they may be meant to describe our Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of glory. This would emphasise the reference to His exaltation contained in the title Lord, and it has an exact parallel in 1 Cor. 2 [8]. But in either case it is important to notice that the believing relation of Christians to the Lord Jesus Christ must determine everything in their conduct: whatever is inconsistent with it—like respect of persons—is *ipso facto* condemned. If the name of Jesus is less frequently mentioned in James than in other New Testament writings, there is none which is more pervaded by the authority of His word. If the Jewish Wisdom literature is present to the writer's mind, the tones of the sermon on the mount echo without ceasing in his conscience. The coming of the Lord is the object of all Christian hope; the demand which its delay makes for patience is the sum of all Christian trials (5 [7-8]). The name of Jesus is the noble name which has been invoked upon Christians at their baptism (2 [7]), and pious regard for it is a decisive Christian motive. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Judge who stands before the door (4 [9]), and His name is the resource of the Christian when confronted with sickness, sin, and death (5 [13-16]). It ought to be noticed here that the true reading in 5 [14] is, Let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name. Of course the Name meant is that of Jesus, but this did not need to be stated: for the writer, as for Peter and for all Christians, there was no other name. The other examples of this use in the New Testament have the same significance. 'They departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name' (Acts 5 [41]). 'For the sake of the Name they went forth taking nothing from the Gentiles' (3 John, ver. 7). A writer who shares this way of thinking about the name of Jesus, who calls himself in one

breath slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who finds in the relation to Christ and His name assumed in baptism and described as faith the finest and most powerful motives, whose conscience has been quickened by the word of Jesus, and whose hope means that Jesus is coming to judge the world and right the wronged, can hardly be said to stand on a lower level of Christianity, whatever his date, than the other New Testament writers. He may or may not have had theologising interests, though he found no call to exhibit them in this letter; but it is clear that in his religion Christ occupied the central and controlling place. He would not have been at home in any Christian society we have yet discovered if it had been otherwise.

VI

CHRIST IN THE EPISTLE OF JUDE AND IN THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

The close but obscure connexion of these two epistles justifies us in taking them together, and even if we regard them both as pseudepigraphic they are witnesses to the place of Jesus in the mind and life of early Christians. If they do not tell us about Peter and Jude, they tell us about other people, whose faith is as much a matter of historical fact as that of the two apostles. Like James (and Paul in some of his epistles) both Jude and Peter announce themselves as bond-servants of Jesus Christ, and both introduce for the first time in their description of Jesus the word δεσπότης which is proper to this relation: they speak of false teachers and bad men 'who deny our only Master (δεσπότην) and Lord Jesus Christ' (Jude, ver. 4), or 'who deny even the Master who bought them' (2 Peter 2 [1]). In the first of these

passages it has been questioned whether two persons are not meant: does not 'our only Master,' it is said, signify God, in distinction from 'our Lord Jesus Christ'? The same question is raised again in 2 Peter 1[1], where it is open to discussion whether the writer speaks of 'the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ' (one person, as it is rendered in the Revised Version), or of 'the righteousness of our God, and the Saviour Jesus Christ' (two persons, as in margin of Revised Version). The difficulty is the same as in Titus 2[13], where the text of the Revised Version has 'the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ' (one person), and the margin, 'the glory of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ' (two persons). Strict grammar favours the rendering according to which there is only one person mentioned in all these places, Jesus Christ, who is called 'our only Master and Lord,' and 'our great God and Saviour.' There are cases, however, in which strict grammar is misleading, and these may be among them. It is awkward to call Jesus Christ 'our God and Saviour' in 2 Peter 1[1], and then to speak in the very next sentence of the knowledge of 'God, and of Jesus our Lord.' Dr. Moulton thinks that 'familiarity with the everlasting apotheosis that flaunts itself in the papyri and inscriptions of Ptolemaic and Imperial times lends strong support to Wendland's contention that Christians, from the latter part of the first century onward, deliberately annexed for their Divine Master the phraseology that was impiously arrogated to themselves by some of the worst of men.'[1] A writer like Jude, however, who is conscious of sustaining a tradition, and exhorts his readers to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, would hardly have described Jesus as the only δεσπότης and κύριος merely under constraint from

[1] *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, i. 84.

the impieties of emperor worship. His divine greatness is realised on independent grounds and represented in independent ways. It is conspicuous in the two passages which always redeem Jude in the common Christian mind from the reproach of quoting Enoch. One is the sublime doxology in vv. 24, 25, in which glory, majesty, dominion and power are ascribed 'to the only wise God our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord': it is this mediation of Christ in Christian worship in which His final significance for faith is expressed. The other is the equally sublime exhortation of v. 20: 'But ye, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' Here as in so many other passages we are confronted with the Holy Spirit, God, and our Lord Jesus Christ as the total manifestation of that on which our salvation depends. It is in the same region as that in which God and His Spirit work that our Lord Jesus Christ works; it is to that side of reality that He belongs; the whole religious life of men is divinely determined by Him as it could not be by any other; this is His permanent and incomparable place in the faith and life of Christians.

It is not necessary to look for peculiarities which distinguish 2nd Peter from Jude: its dependence can hardly be questioned. It is enough to remark that the writer has a strong partiality for those full descriptions which bring out the importance of Christ to the Christian mind; he speaks three times of 'our Lord Jesus Christ,' three times again of 'our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' and once of 'the apostles of our Lord and Saviour.' This fulness does not strike one in reading as an orthodox formalism, but rather conveys a deep sense, on the part of the writer, of the superhuman greatness of the per-

son of whom he speaks. It is the oldest, it might be said the only, doctrine of revealed religion, that salvation belongs to the Lord; and when Jesus is habitually confessed as Lord and Saviour, His significance for Christian faith is absolute and divine.

VII

CHRIST IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

When we come to the synoptic gospels, we are confronted with difficulties of a new kind. The synoptic gospels contain not only the testimony of the writers to Jesus, but also (through that testimony) the testimony of Jesus to Himself. It is certain that the writers of the gospels drew no clear and conscious distinction between these two things, and could not have conceived that one of them should ever be used to discredit the other. They never thought that the place which Jesus had in their faith was anything else than the place which belonged to Him, and was truly and rightly His: they never thought they were giving Him what was not His due, or what He had not really claimed: the distinction between the religion in which they lived and the historical support which could be asserted for it in the personality and life of Jesus was one which had no formal existence for them. This may be said quite confidently in spite of all that we hear about the 'apologetic' motives which are alleged to account for so much of what we read in our gospels. Jesus, we are told, had such and such a character or value in the faith of His disciples, and in order to justify this character there must be such and such words or deeds or events in His life. If they were not supplied in tradition they were produced more

or less spontaneously by the Christian consciousness or imagination. There was no sin in this, no intent to deceive either others or oneself; Christ must have said or done such and such things, and of course, therefore, He did say and do them. He is represented in our gospels as so saying and doing them, and that is why it is so difficult to use the gospels simply as historical documents. Their writers have no independent historical interest, and what they give us is not the representation of Christ as He really was, but Christ as to them He must have been, Christ transfigured in the luminous haze of faith. The task of the historian is to dissipate the haze, to see Jesus as He really was, to reduce Him to the historic proportions in which alone He can have lived and moved among men. To faith it may be an ungrateful task, in performing which it is impossible to avoid wounding the tenderest feelings; yet faith in God can have no interest superior to that of truth, and ought to be confident that whatever it may lose in the process the end can be nothing but gain.

At the point which we have now reached in our discussion it is necessary to have the possibilities here indicated in view, but the critical appreciation of them will come later. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to say that while everything that we find in an evangelist concerning Jesus—including all that is said and done by Jesus Himself—must be taken into account in reproducing that evangelist's religion, we shall here confine our attention to that minimum of matter in which the mind of the evangelist can be clearly distinguished from that of his subject. There are characteristics in Mark, in Matthew, and in Luke which belong to each in particular, and in these, though not in these only, we have a clue to what we seek.

(*a*) *The Gospel according to Mark*

The oldest of our gospels has a title: 'the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Son of God).' It can hardly be doubted that the author uses the term gospel in the sense of the apostolic church. Luke does not use it at all, and Matthew never without qualification (see Matt. 4 [23], 9 [35], 24 [14], 26 [13]); but Mark has it six times without any qualification, and in two others he has 'the gospel of God' (1 [14]), indicating its author, and 'the gospel of Jesus Christ' (1 [1]), indicating its subject. He does not call his book a gospel, but to present Jesus as He is presented in this book is to preach the gospel, or at least to exhibit, as Mark understood them, the facts on the basis of which the gospel was preached. For him Jesus is not so much a preacher of the gospel, though he says that He came proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying 'Repent and believe in the gospel'; He is the subject of the gospel and its contents. He is not the first of a series of messengers who all came with the same message, and were all related to it in the same way; the message itself which is called gospel is embodied in Him, and the only way to deliver it is to make Him visible. This is implied in the very use of the term gospel, and it is sufficient to put Mark, as a witness to the place of Jesus in Christianity, in line with those whose testimony we have already examined. Whatever his Christology may be, Jesus has a place in his religion to which there is no analogy. The gospel is the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is not the gospel of any other. Could Mark, or can we, conceive any other figure sharing in the place and the religious significance of Jesus as they are presented to us in his brief and vivid record?

Mark, as his title shows, conceived Jesus as the Christ. What this means has been explained already in the

section on primitive Christian preaching. It means that he thought of Jesus while he wrote as exalted at God's right hand, and ready to come again and to establish the Kingdom of God with power. But the present exaltation of Jesus is not unrelated to his past. The character or dignity or function of the Christ attached to Jesus while He was on earth, though it was known at first only to Himself, and though it only came to be apprehended, fitfully and uncertainly, even by those who knew Him best. This has indeed been disputed and denied in recent times. An acute but unbalanced German scholar, the late Professor Wrede of Breslau, argued that no one ever thought of Jesus as the Christ till after the resurrection, and that many of the difficulties and obscurities in the Gospel of Mark are due to the evangelist's efforts to carry back into the career of Jesus upon earth this conception of Messiahship which is applicable only to the Risen Lord. This, again, we do not need to consider here. Whether he was justified or not in doing so, it is certain that the evangelist does carry back the conception of the Christ into the lifetime of Jesus; he represents Peter confessing Him to be the Christ, and Jesus accepting the confession, and making it the starting-point for teaching those truths about Himself and His work which peculiarly constituted 'the gospel.' As Wellhausen has pointed out, there is a whole section of the Gospel according to Mark, that which extends from Peter's confession (8^{27}) to Jesus' reply to the ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee (10^{45}), which has a peculiarly 'Christian' character. It is concerned very much with the doctrine of the suffering Christ, the Son of Man, who has come to give His life a ransom for many, and who after His death will come again in the glory of His Father with the holy angels; and whatever its historic relation to Jesus, it certainly embodies the

convictions of Mark as to the place of Jesus in religion. Apart from this, we are not able to say much. Mark never refers to any fulfilment of prophecy in the life of Jesus, as proving or illuminating His Messianic character; the textual difficulties connected with the quotation of Malachi and Isaiah in chap. 1 [2f.] make it quite probable that these verses were inserted by another hand. It is more plausible to argue that he thought of the mighty works which he records, works in the main of healing love, as appropriate to the Messianic character; this at least would be in keeping with the line of thought taken in Acts 2 [22], 10 [38] by Peter, with whose name the Gospel of Mark is connected in the earliest tradition. In His baptism, Jesus was anointed with Holy Spirit and power, and the manifestations of that power in His lifetime were indications of what He was. The words 'Son of God' in Mark 1 [1] are of doubtful authenticity, and we cannot argue from them. Where they stand, they are probably meant to be taken as synonymous with Christ or Messiah. As far as we can see, it is in His baptism with the Holy Spirit that Jesus, as Mark understood it, became the Christ, the Son of God. From that hour He was all that in the faith and experience of Christians He ever came to be. But He could not tell what He was as one can impart a piece of indifferent information to another. He had to reveal Himself as what He was, in life and word and works; He had to be discovered as what He was by men who associated with Him in obedience, trust, and love. The truncated form in which the gospel has come to us, with no resurrection scene, and no words of the Risen Lord, prevents us from seeing as directly in Mark, as we do in the other evangelists, the full scope of the writer's faith. But we have seen what he means by the term gospel, and we know from words which he ascribes to Jesus that he believed the

gospel to be meant for all mankind (13 [10], 14 [9]). Jesus exalted as Lord and Saviour of all, the Jesus whom the evangelist can exhibit to us in this character even in the days of His flesh, is the same incomparable and incommensurable person whom we have met everywhere in New Testament religion.

(*b*) *The Gospel according to Matthew*

In the Gospel according to Matthew it is much easier to distinguish the author from the subject, for there is much more which belongs to the author alone. The first two chapters have no parallel in the earlier gospel narrative, and they show us at once the peculiar place which Jesus held in the evangelist's faith. Like all New Testament writers he conceives Jesus as the Christ. Whether 'the book of the generation' (1 [1]) refers to the genealogy and the stories of the birth only, or to the narrative as a whole, it is concerned with Jesus as Messiah, son of David, son of Abraham. The idea underlying the genealogy is that the history of Israel, which means the history of God's gracious dealing with the human race, is consummated in Jesus. He is the ideal Son of David to whom it all looks forward, and it is in Him that all the promises made by God to the fathers are to be fulfilled. The characteristic of the Gospel according to Matthew, or perhaps we should rather say the characteristic interest of the author, is seen in his continual reference to Scriptures which have been fulfilled in Jesus. The proof from prophecy that Jesus is the Messiah preoccupies him from beginning to end: 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet' runs through his work like a refrain. It is quite true that many of his proofs are to us unconvincing. We can see no religious and no in-

tellectual value in references like those in Matthew 2 [15] to Hosea, or Matthew 2 [18] to Jeremiah. We do not think of a Messianic programme, set out beforehand in the Old Testament, and carried through by Jesus, with precise correspondence, from point to point; correspondence, we feel, is one thing, and fulfilment another. But this only means that the form through which the evangelist expresses his conviction about Jesus is inadequate to the truth in his mind. What he is assured of is that the whole divine intention which pervades the ancient revelation has been consummated at last, and that the consummation is Jesus. The argument from prophecy that Jesus is the Christ is not for us an argument that this or that detail in the life of Jesus answers to this or that phrase in the Hebrew Scriptures; it is the argument that the Old Testament and the New are one and continuous, and that what God is preparing in the one He has achieved in the other. Imperfect as is the form in which this is occasionally conveyed by the evangelist, it cannot be doubted that this is substantially his thought. The unity of the Old Testament and the New, which makes Jesus the centre and the key to God's purposes, was the core of the evangelist's religious convictions, and it is in harmony with the place assigned to Jesus in the common faith.

In speaking of the title of St. Mark's Gospel—'the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Son of God)'—it has been remarked that the bracketed words, which are of doubtful genuineness, are probably to be taken as synonymous with the Christ. Though this is probable, however, it is by no means certain. It is quite possible, if Mark wrote these words, that he understood them as Paul would have done; and that though the narrative part of his gospel, which is included in the limits set in Acts 1 [21 f.], represents the Divine Sonship of Jesus as in a

peculiar way connected with His baptism, Mark may have conceived it in a higher and independent sense. In view of the fact that the consciousness of Divine Sonship—in other words, of the Fatherhood of God—is the characteristic mark of the Christian religion, the very God whom Christians worship being the God who is Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, it has always seemed to the writer difficult to believe that Son of God when applied by Christians to Jesus meant nothing but Messiah. It must have taken an effort of which Christians were incapable to evacuate the title of everything filial in the Christian sense, of everything which went to constitute their own religious consciousness, while yet that consciousness owed its very being to the Divine Sonship of Jesus. But be the case as it may with Mark, it is certain that to Matthew the Son of God is more than the Messianic King. It would be inappropriate to refer here to words which the evangelist records as spoken by Jesus; such words will come up for consideration at a later stage. It is enough to recall the story of the birth of the Christ. The evangelist sees in it the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah: Behold the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel. Attention has usually been concentrated here on the supernatural mode in which Jesus entered the world; but if we wish to see the place he held in the religion of the evangelist, and of those for whom he wrote, the most important word is the name of the child. Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, *God with us*: it is here his significance lies. The Divine Sonship is something more than is declared with power in the resurrection; it is something more than is revealed to Jesus Himself in the baptism; it is something essential to this person, something which enters into the very constitution of His being, which

connects Him immediately with God, and makes His presence with us the guarantee and the equivalent of the presence of God Himself. This, at least, is how the evangelist conceived it, and nothing could show more clearly the place which Jesus filled in his faith. Of necessity it is a place in which He can have neither rival nor partner. As God with us, Jesus is protected by the same jealousy which says, Thou shalt have no other Gods before me. In everything that concerns our religious life, our relations to God, we must be determined by Him alone.

There is another point in his narrative at which the peculiarities of Matthew's gospel may be supposed to throw light on the religious value which he ascribed to Jesus. It is that at which Peter makes the confession of Jesus' Messiahship at Cæsarea Philippi. In Mark's version Jesus asks simply, Whom say ye that I am? and Peter answers as simply, Thou art the Christ. In Matthew both the question and the answer are significantly expanded. The question becomes, Who do men say that *the Son of Man* is? and the answer, Thou art the Christ, *the Son of the living God.* The balancing of the Son of Man and the Son of the living God is remarkable. Possibly there is the germ in it of what came centuries afterwards to be known as the doctrine of the two distinct natures, divine and human, in the one person of the Saviour; but even if such precise theological definition were far from the evangelist's thoughts, we feel that the person so solemnly and sublimely described is one who stands quite alone. In a way of which we cannot but be sensible, though we may not be able to explain it, He is related to God and to man, and has a significance for God and for man which cannot be shared. To think of Him as a person who can be put into His place among the distinguished servants of God

who from time to time appear in the world to animate and bless their weaker fellows—as 'a prophet, or one of the prophets'—is not to think of Him as Matthew does.

The place which Jesus occupied in the faith of Matthew is, however, seen most conspicuously and unambiguously in his account of the appearance of the Risen Saviour to the eleven. Those who will not regard as historical the words ascribed to Jesus on this occasion are all the more bound to look at them, as they usually do, as expressing the evangelist's own faith. Jesus is exalted as Lord of all. He has all power given to Him in heaven and on earth. He commissions His disciples, in virtue of this exaltation, to go and make all nations His disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded; and He promises them His abiding presence to the end of the world. Granting for the moment that what we hear in this place is not so much the historical voice of Jesus as the voice of the Catholic Church telling itself through the evangelist what it has realised Jesus to be, there can be no mistake about the place in which it sets Him. He shares the throne of God, and there is no power in heaven or on earth which can dispute with His. He is destined to a universal sovereignty in grace, and sends His chosen witnesses to make disciples of all the nations. Baptism, the initiatory rite of the new religious community, is baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; its value is that when men accept it in penitence and faith it brings their life into vital relation to that name; all that is signified by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit becomes theirs; the benediction, inspiration, and protection of this holy name enter into and cover all their life. But here, as we have often had occasion to remark already, the Son

stands in the same line with the Father and the Spirit, confronting all nations. He belongs to the Divine as contrasted with the human side in religious experience. That He was truly human it could never have occurred to the evangelist to doubt; but just as little could it have occurred to him to think that He was merely human, another child of the same race, to whom we are related precisely as we are to each other. Jesus as Matthew sees Him and exhibits Him at last is the Lord—the Lord who is exalted in divine power and glory, and who is perpetually present with His own.

How far this conception of Jesus modified the presentation of His life in the gospel, or whether it modified it at all, are questions reserved for the present: what we are concerned to note is that His place in the faith of the evangelist is that which is assigned Him in New Testament faith in general. The facts may or may not be able to support His greatness, but this greatness is what they are asked to support.

(*c*) *The Gospel according to Luke*

In the third gospel it is easier even than in Matthew to point out the characteristics of the writer's faith. They are conspicuous alike in what he tells of the birth of Jesus, and of His intercourse with the disciples after the resurrection. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and the evangelist does not leave us in any doubt as to what these epithets mean. He does, indeed, in the opening chapters, use language of a peculiarly Jewish cast in describing the Saviour and the work He had to do: 'He shall be great and shall be called Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall rule over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no

end' (1 32 f.). But like Matthew he refers the origination of the historic person who is the subject of this prophecy to the immediate act of God. 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee,' the angel says to His mother, 'and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God' (1 35). Clearly, to the writer, the Divine Sonship of Jesus was nothing official, nothing to which any Israelite might aspire, or to which any man by the favour of heaven might be promoted; it is of His very being, and in the nature of the case can belong to Him alone. Any one who will may say that the mode in which the personality of Jesus originated cannot be a question of religious importance: but, however that may be, those who believed that His personality did originate in this unparalleled way must have given Him an unparalleled place in their faith.

In the body of his gospel the scene which throws most light upon Luke's way of regarding Jesus, is that which is given in ch. 4 16-30. This scene is antedated by the evangelist, as is clear from the reference to a ministry of Jesus at Capernaum in ver. 23, but it stands where it does because it is characteristic for the writer, and forms to his mind an appropriate frontispiece to the story of Jesus. The heart of it lies in the words, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears; but as these are words of Jesus, not of the evangelist, their full import need not be considered here. All we are called to remark is that Luke, though he makes no continuous appeal, like Matthew's, to the argument from prophecy, still writes from the beginning in the consciousness that God's gracious promises to His people were fulfilled in Jesus. 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He hath anointed Me to preach glad tidings to the poor.' The universal scope of the gospel—the fact that it is destined for all

mankind, and that Jesus, therefore, is Lord of all—is hinted also in this typical introduction to His ministry. He is rejected in His own city, but reminds His unbelieving townsmen how in ancient times, though there were many widows and many lepers in Israel, only a Sidonian and a Syrian had experienced the mercy of God. But all that is characteristic in Luke's faith is condensed into what he tells us of the Risen Jesus and His intercourse with the eleven. It is the Risen Jesus who is the Christ, and we see in Luke $24^{44\,ff.}$ his significance in the evangelist's religion. It is He who is the subject of the Old Testament throughout; in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms—in the three great divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures—there are things written which have been fulfilled in Him, and to which His life, death, and resurrection are the only key. He opens the mind of His disciples to understand these things. The purport of all revelation, He would have them know—and this certainly is the understanding of Luke—is that the Christ should suffer, and should rise again on the third day, and that repentance for remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations. That the commission implied in this may be properly discharged, and the disciples prove worthy witnesses to their Master, He promises to send forth upon them the promise of the Father, the Spirit which will invest them in power from on high. It needs a greater effort than we can easily make to realise that Jesus had the place which this implies in the hearts of men who knew Him upon earth. But it is not open to question that it is the place He had in the mind of Luke. He owed His being in the world to the immediate and mysterious act of God. In His baptism He Himself was clothed with power from on high. The great and gracious purpose of God, shadowed forth in ancient

Scripture, was achieved in Him. The hope of the sinful world lay in the repentance and remission of sins preached in His name. The spiritual power—in other words, the power of God—which accompanied the apostles' testimony and evoked new life in the souls of men, was His gift. The words in ch. 24 [52]—'they worshipped Him'—are possibly not part of the original text, but there is nothing in them out of harmony with this representation of Jesus. The person whose origin and career are such as the evangelist describes—the Person who is now exalted to God's right hand, and who sends the promised Spirit—is not a member of the Church but its Head. Luke has a peculiar interest in His humanity; on six separate occasions he tells us of His prayers, besides referring to His habit of withdrawing to desert places for devotion; but side by side with this simple human dependence on God there is that transcendent something which is fully revealed in His exaltation, in His gift of the Spirit, and in His mission of the apostles to all the world. It is not the particular way in which Luke conceived this or any part of it—in other words, it is not his Christology as an intellectual construction—with which we are concerned; it is the fact that Jesus had in the religious life of the evangelist the place and the importance which are here implied. Not that there is anything in it which we have not seen elsewhere, but it shows us once more, and if possible more clearly than ever, how incomparable is the significance of Jesus for Christian faith.

It is natural for us to examine the synoptic gospels separately, yet we must not overlook the fact that they are not independent, and that it is not the personal peculiarities of their authors which make them important. In point of fact they are anonymous writings, and though there are excellent reasons for connecting them with the

persons whose names they bear, it is not on this that their value depends. It lies greatly in the fact that they were produced in the Church, for the Church, and by men who were members of the Church, so that they are witnesses to us not of the individual peculiarities of their writers, but of the common faith. They were all written in the generation which followed the death of St. Paul, and what we see in them, speaking broadly, is Jesus as He was apprehended by the Church of those early days. The Jesus whom we see here is the Jesus on which the Christian community over all the world depended for its being. As far as He lived at all for the early Catholic Church he lived in the character in which He is here exhibited. In other words, He lived not as another good man, however distinguished his goodness might be, but as one who confronted men in the saving power, and therefore in the truth and reality of God. Whether the words in Luke 24 [52] are genuine or not, the fact remains that at no date can we find any trace of a Church which did not worship Him.

VIII

CHRIST IN THE JOHANNINE WRITINGS

The New Testament writings which bear the name of John are certainly connected somehow, though how it is not easy to determine. It is not so long ago since the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel were regarded as the opposite extremes of early Christianity, representative of modes of thought and feeling so remote and antagonistic as to be virtually exclusive of each other; but deeper study has brought them in some respects into closer mutual relation than any books of the New Tes-

tament. In both there is the same passionate uncompromising temper, the same sense of the absolute distinction between that which is and that which is not Christian. In the Apocalypse it is manifested on the field of history and of conduct; there is war without truce and without quarter between the followers of the Lamb and those of the beast, and the supreme, we might almost say the sole, Christian virtue is fidelity unto death. In the gospel it sometimes seems to be put more abstractly; it is exhibited in the antitheses of light and darkness, life and death, love and hatred. These antitheses, however, are absolute, and they centre round Christ. He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son has not the life. He who believes on the Son is not condemned; he who believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. In spite, however, of the fundamental affinity of these writings in temper, it will be convenient to examine them apart and to see in each in turn the significance of Christ for the writer's faith.

(*a*) *The Apocalypse*

There is a sense in which the Apocalypse might be called the most Christian book in the New Testament. Written at a time of persecution and conflict, every feeling in it is strained and intense; there is a passion in all it asserts of Christ, and in all its longings for Christ, which can hardly be paralleled elsewhere. If what we had to do was to reconstruct the Christology of the writer we might have a difficult task. His picture of Jesus has features which seem to come from the most various sources—Jewish Messianic expectations, resting on the book of Daniel or apocalyptic books of the same kind; the earthly life and the passion of Jesus; the epis-

tles of Paul, and possibly even the Jewish speculation of Alexandria. Bousset refers only to one part of the book—the epistles to the seven churches—but his words hold good of the whole when he writes: 'What we have here is a layman's faith, undisturbed by any theological reflexion, a faith which, with untroubled *naïveté*, simply identifies Christ in His predicates and attributes with God, and on the other hand also calmly takes over quite archaic elements.' [1] It is the writer's faith in Christ we wish to define, and the absence of theology should make our task the easier.

The book is described as the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him. The subordination of Jesus Christ to God is assumed, but Jesus Christ is for the Church the source and in some sense also the subject of all that is revealed. This is part at least of what is meant in 19^{10}: the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. The inspired voices which are heard in the Christian community are moved by Him and bear witness to Him. But passing from this point, we find at once the fullest revelation of the seer's faith in Christ in what may be called his covering letter, enclosing the epistles of cc. 2 and 3: 'John, to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him which is and which was and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they which pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall

[1] *Die Offenbarung Johannis*, 280.

mourn over Him. Even so, Amen.' What first strikes us here, as it has so often done already, is the co-ordination of Jesus Christ with God and His Spirit. We may say 'His Spirit' quite freely; for whatever may be the genealogy of the expression, 'the seven spirits which are before His throne'—and it can hardly be questioned that it is connected with the Persian Amshaspands—the seven spirits are never separated in the Apocalypse; they have not, as in the Persian mythology, proper names; they are treated as a unity in which the fulness of the divine power is gathered up. The eternal God, the Spirit in its plenitude, and Jesus Christ: this is the sum of the divine reality from which grace and peace come to the churches. No one has in his mind all that a Christian means when he says God unless he has in his mind all that is covered in these three names. For the writer of the Apocalypse, and for the faith by which he lives, Jesus Christ belongs to the sphere of the divine. After naming Jesus he proceeds to describe Him as 'the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, the ruler of the kings of the earth.' Possibly all these words describe Jesus in His exaltation: He is the faithful witness as bearing from heaven that true testimony to God (or to Himself) by which, as we have seen, the prophets of the Christian Church are inspired. But in the doxology which follows there is more than this. The writer turns from the exaltation of Jesus to His passion, and it is the passion, in its motive and its fruits, which inspires his praise. 'Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins in His blood . . . be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever.' Nothing could be conceived in worship more intense, more passionate and unreserved, than this: it gives to Jesus Christ, with irrepressible abandonment, the utmost that the soul can ever give to God. This is not theology, but worship, and it is here

the interest lies. It is not orthodoxy, it is living faith, and it shows us the place of Christ in the religion of John and of those to whom he wrote. And the Church not only owes to Jesus the wonderful emancipation and exaltation here described—the liberation from sin and the kingly and priestly dignity—it owes to Him also everything for which it still hopes. 'Behold, He cometh with the clouds.' What His coming means it takes the the whole book to tell, but it so includes every Christian hope that all Christian prayers can be briefly comprehended in the words, 'Come, Lord Jesus' (22 20).

The vision of the Son of Man in ch. 1 12 ff. is remarkable as applying to Jesus several of the features which in Daniel 7, on which it is based, belong to the Ancient of Days; but what is most remarkable in it is the assumption of divine attributes by the Risen Lord Himself. 'I am the first and the last and the living one, and I became dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever, and have the keys of death and of Hades.' This is not the language of the first of the saints, but of one whose relation to believers is quite disparate from any relation they can ever bear to each other. What gives it impressiveness, too, is the fact that it is no mere theologoumenon, no piece of speculative doctrine which has been artificially produced and is without practical consequence; the divine significance of Jesus which is exhibited in it is applied with heart-searching power, in the seven epistles, to everything in the moral life of the Church. Addressed as they are to local communities, and dealing with local conditions, these epistles are almost as directly as the central chapters of the fourth gospel a testimony of Jesus to Himself. They are concerned throughout with Him, and with His relations to the churches, and His interest in them. It is worth while to read them thinking only of the Speaker, or noticing only what is said in

the first person. 'I know thy works. Thou hast patience and didst endure for My name's sake. I have it against thee that thou hast left thy first love. I will remove thy candlestick out of its place unless thou repent. Thou hatest . . . what I also hate. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life. . . . These things saith the First and the Last . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. . . . These things saith He that hath the sharp two-edged sword. . . . Thou holdest fast My name and didst not deny My faith even in the days when Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, was slain among you. . . . To him that overcometh will I give of the hidden manna. . . . These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes as a flame of fire. . . . I know thy works . . . but I have against thee. . . . All the churches shall know that I am He that searcheth reins and hearts and shall give you each according to your works. . . . What ye have hold fast until I come. And he that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, I will give him authority over the nations. . . . These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God. . . . I know thy works. . . . I have found no works of thine fulfilled before My God. . . . Thou hast a few names in Sardis that have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. He that overcometh shall be clothed thus in white garments, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. . . . These things saith He that is holy, He that is true. . . . Thou hast kept My word and hast not denied My name. I will make them know that I have loved thee. Thou hast kept the word of My patience, and I will keep thee from the hour of temptation. He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the Temple

of My God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, and My new name. . . . These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works. Thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of Me. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any one hear My voice and open the door, I will come into him and will sup with him and he with Me. He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me on My throne, even as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.' . . . For the practical comprehension of the place of Jesus, not in the creed or the theology, but in the faith and life of primitive Christianity, these extracts from the epistles to the seven churches are priceless. It does not matter what the speculative Christology of the writer was, or whether he had any such thing; it does not matter, in phrases like 'the beginning of the creation of God' (3 [14]), and 'the word of God' (19 [13]), whether we are or are not to trace the influence of Paul or of the Alexandrian philosophers: here we are in contact with the living soul of Christianity, and however He may have been conceived we see what Christ vitally and practically meant for it. In any meaning we can attach to the term, His significance for it was divine. It is impossible to convey any idea of it if we think of Jesus as related to the Church and its members merely in the way in which they are related to each other. The whole conception is the more remarkable in the Apocalypse because the writer shows himself peculiarly sensitive about worship being offered to angels, superhuman though they are (19 [10], 22 [9]), and because the idea of apotheosis, or the bestowing of divine honours on a

human being, is, as his attitude to Cæsar worship shows, one which he regards with the utmost horror. The adoration of the Lamb, an adoration in which not only those who are redeemed to God by His blood participate, but every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth, is in keeping with the divine significance He has for Christian souls. If He sometimes stands between the throne and the Redeemed, as their representative with God, at others He is on the throne, as God's omnipotent love ruling all things on their behalf. The throne itself is the throne of God and of the Lamb, and it is the glory of those who partake in the first resurrection that they become priests of God and of Christ (20 [6]). If we add to this that the sum of all Christian hope is the Coming of Christ, and that with His final advent all things are made new, it is unnecessary to say more. The writer's Christology may mingle naively archaic elements like the lion of the tribe of Judah, or the iron sceptre which dashes nations in pieces, with speculative ideas like the first principle of creation or the eternal divine word—it matters not. What his work reveals is that Jesus is practically greater than any or all these ways of representing Him; neither the imagination of the Jew nor the philosophical faculty of the Greek can embody Him; in the faith and life of the seer He has an importance to which neither is adequate; the only true name for Him is one which is above every name.

(*b*) *The Epistles of John*

It is convenient to take the epistles of John before the Gospel, not because they are earlier in date, which is improbable, but because they are epistles, and we can see without difficulty the place which Jesus holds in the writer's faith. The interest of these documents is all the

greater that the author himself is deeply concerned to show that that place can be historically justified.

The Christian religion has to do with what he calls eternal life. This life has been manifested, and has become an experience and a possession of men. The writer himself shares in it, and it is his desire and the purpose of his epistle that his readers should share in it also. 'What we have seen and heard we announce to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us: yea and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ' (1. 1 [3]). This co-ordination of the Son with the Father, which we have traced in all the New Testament writings from the epistles to the Thessalonians onward, is peculiarly characteristic of the epistles of John. The Son and the Father are terms of absolute significance; there is only one Son as there is only one Father, and the salvation of men depends upon a relation to the Son and the Father in which neither can be conceived apart from the other. 'God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life, he who has not the Son of God has not the life' (1. 5 [11]). He who denies the Son has not the Father either, but he who confesses the Son has the Father also (1. 2 [23]). The perfect Christian life is that of those who abide in the Son and in the Father (1. 2 [24]). 'We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life' (1. 5 [20]). This is the language not of theology, but of spiritual experience, and it shows, with a clearness which cannot be mistaken, the place which Jesus holds in the religious life of the apostle. He owes to Him as to God, or he owes to God in and through Him alone, all that he calls truth and life. It is this incomparable significance of Christ,

this experimentally ascertained fact, that He is to God what no other is, and therefore discharges in the carrying out of God's redeeming work functions on which no other can intrude, which is represented when He is designated the only-begotten Son (1. 4 [9]). It is perhaps an outcome of it that the apostle never calls Christians sons of God; the title Son is reserved for the Only-begotten, on whom all are dependent for their knowledge of the Father; the other members of the family are not υἱοὶ (sons) to John, but τέκνα (children). It even leads to such an unparalleled expression as we find in the salutation of the second epistle: Grace, mercy, peace shall be with you from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ *the Son of the Father*, in truth and love.

The fellowship with the Father and the Son in which eternal life consists is maintained by walking in the light. When Christians walk in the light, it is made evident in two results: first, their unity is maintained—they have fellowship one with other; second, their holiness is promoted—the blood of Jesus, God's son, cleanses them from all sin (1. 1 [7]). Sin is that which mars fellowship with God, and makes it impossible; and if eternal life can only be realised in divine fellowship, then the work of the Son of God, in putting such fellowship within our reach, must be in its very essence a work related to sin. This may be said without exaggeration to be the burden of the first epistle. 'My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world' (1. 2 [1 f.]). 'I write to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake' (1. 2 [12]). These two ideas—the eternal life into which men are initiated by Christ; and the propitiation

for sins on which it is dependent—are combined in the wonderful passage in 1. 4 [9 f.], where both are interpreted as manifestations of the love of God. 'In this was the love of God manifested in our case, that God hath sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might *live* through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us, and sent His Son a *propitiation for our sins*.' When we put these various utterances together we see the universal and absolute significance of Jesus in the faith of the writer. Jesus determines everything in the relations of God and man, not only eventually or once for all, but continuously; His blood cleanses, in the present tense: if any man sin, we have an advocate for the emergency; Christians are those who are in the Son (1. 2 [5]), and who abide in Him (1. 2 [6]). The full apostolic testimony is that the Father has sent His Son as Saviour of the world (1. 4 [14]). It is only excessive familiarity which can deaden our minds to assertions so stupendous. There is nothing like them elsewhere in Scripture. No earlier messenger of God, Moses, Elijah, or Isaiah, has anything analogous said of him. The conception of a prophet does not help us in the very least to appreciate the conception of the only-begotten Son, who is the Saviour of the world because He is the propitiation for its sins. He cannot be understood except as one who confronts men in the truth, love, and power of God—not one of ourselves, to whom we owe no more, at least in kind, than we owe to each other; but one through whom, and through whom alone, God enlightens, redeems and quickens men. The idea of His exaltation is not so constantly expressed as in the epistles of Paul, but His Parousia or manifestation in glory is expected, and the consummation of all Christian hopes is connected with it. The believer is so to live that he may not be

ashamed before Him at His coming (1. 2 [28]), nay, that he may have boldness in the day of judgment (1. 4 [17]): we know that if He shall be manifested we shall be like Him; and having this hope set upon Him we must purify ourselves as He was pure (1. 3 [2 f.]).

And yet, side by side with this presentation of Jesus, which may be said to be at once transcendent and experimental, we find a persistent emphasis laid on the reality of His human life. The epistle is a testimony to one who had lived as man among men, and everything that imperils this historical basis of Christianity imperils the Christian life itself. This at least is how the matter is conceived by the author. He is the only New Testament writer who uses the term antichrist; and the antichrist is identified by him with the denial of Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh (1. 2 [18-22], 4 [3], 11. verse 7). The reference in these passages is to the mode of thought which is usually associated with the name of Cerinthus. Cerinthus distinguished Jesus from the Christ.[1] The Christ was a divine being who descended from heaven and was associated with Jesus from His baptism onward; this is what is meant by coming 'through the water.' But according to Cerinthus, he came through the water only; he was not indissolubly associated with Jesus so as to pass also through His agony and death. He did not come in the water and in the blood. This is the mode of thought which, to the writer, is 'antichrist,' a denial of the essential facts on which Christianity depends for its being. For him the only Christ is Jesus; the only fatal lie is that which declares that Jesus is not the Christ (1. 2 [22]). He has what might almost be called a dogmatic test for 'spirits' speaking in the Church: every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ as come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus

[1] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* i. 21.

is not of God (1. 4[3]). The one victor over the world is he who believes that *Jesus* is the Son of God, the Jesus who came in the water and in the blood, and whose whole life from the baptism to the passion, unquestioned in its historical reality, is perpetuated in the Church, in its spiritual meaning and virtue, in the Christian sacraments—Baptism answering to 'the water' and the Supper to the 'blood.'[1] What has been already said about the Son as standing in some sort of co-ordination with the Father—about His confronting men as the Saviour of the world, the propitiation for all sin, the sole bearer of eternal life—is not to be put into any kind of competition or contrast with this; in the mind of the writer, the Person of whom these extraordinary things are true is the historical person who was baptized by John in Jordan and who hung at Calvary on the Cross. It is the historical truth and reality of the life of Jesus on which the eternal life of believers is dependent; to assail or undermine the one is to threaten the other at its foundation.

The Cerinthian interpretation of Christianity was no doubt derived from the dualistic philosophy of the time; people shrank or affected to shrink from the idea that a spiritual or divine nature could be intimately or permanently related to matter, and especially from the idea that it could pass through the degrading and odious squalor of the crucifixion. Although the same motives do not operate now, what is practically the same result is often reached under another impulse. Men are attracted by the idea that the Christian religion should be lifted above the region in which historic doubts are possible; they wish to refine it, to spiritualise it, to make it an affair of ideas to which any given historical fact is immaterial. It is as if they said, All these things are true—but they are true in independence of Jesus. There are such realities as

[1] See *Expositor*, May, 1908. Article by the writer.

eternal life, divine sonship, forgiveness of sins—yes, and even propitiation for sins—but they are realities which belong to the eternal world; they have their being in God, and Jesus is only accidentally related to them. Once grasp the principle of Christianity, and Jesus, like every other historical person, is indifferent to it. He has no place in the gospel, though He (and no other) may have been the occasion of these eternal truths breaking upon one or another mind. All that has to be said about this at present is that it is not the understanding of the writer of these epistles. It is a mode of thought which in all essentials was present to his mind, and which he deliberately and decisively rejected. It was not simply incongruous or uncongenial, it was fatal to Christianity as he understood it. For it is impossible to read otherwise than literally the words with which he introduces himself to his readers: 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and our hands handled, concerning the word of life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and announce to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us—that which we have seen and heard we announce to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ' (1. 1 [1-3]). It is this unity of the historical and the eternal, this eternal and divine significance of the historical, which is the very stamp and seal of the Christian religion.

(*c*) *The Gospel according to John*

In examining the synoptic gospels we had occasion to remark on the distinction which has to be drawn in them between the testimony of the evangelists to Jesus

and the testimony of Jesus to Himself. Though the writers of these gospels would not have drawn such a distinction themselves, and did their work, so far as we can see, quite unconscious of it, it is necessary that we should draw it, and it is not in their case too difficult to apply it. The difficulty is very much increased and amounts at various points to an impossibility when we come to the fourth gospel. There is only one style in the gospel from beginning to end, and every one speaks in it—John the Baptist, Jesus, the evangelist himself. There is only one mode of thought represented in it from beginning to end, and every one shares it—John the Baptist, Jesus, the evangelist himself. What it enables us to see with indubitable clearness is the place which Jesus holds in the faith and life of the writer; what we cannot so easily recover from it is the exact relation of this place to that which Jesus Himself claimed. It is true that to a large extent the writer's testimony to Jesus is given through Jesus' life; it is represented as the very word of the Lord Himself. But the critical study of the gospel, and especially the comparison of it with the synoptics, makes it doubtful how far we can take this literally. It is the preponderating opinion of all who have investigated the subject that the fourth gospel is in substance the fulfilment of the words of Jesus which we read in c. 16 [12]: 'I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. But when He is come, the Spirit of truth, He shall lead you into all the truth . . . He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine and shall declare it unto you.' The Jesus who speaks in its pages, though it is in form a gospel, and follows the course of His life on earth, is not only the Jesus who taught in the synagogues and fields of Galilee, or in the temple courts and streets of Jerusalem, but also the exalted Lord whose spirit vivifies and interprets the memories of Jesus in

the heart of an intimate, devoted, and experienced disciple. The words of Jesus are connected, of course, with times and places, for they are given as part of a historical career, but they do not belong to time or place; they are the expression of the eternal truth which was revealed in Jesus, and which for the writer is identical with Him. They are the word, rather than the words, of the Lord. They are the authentic revelation of what He is and was, as His Spirit has interpreted Him to the evangelist, rather than the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus of Nazareth. But while this makes it more difficult to use the fourth gospel without reflection in answering the second of the two questions with which we are concerned, it gives us ampler material to answer the first. The way in which Jesus presents Himself in the gospel can generally be taken as embodying the evangelist's own sense of his place and significance for faith.

Although the procedure is open to criticism, we begin with the prologue. The immense influence which these few verses have had in determining the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and the tendency of a once dominant critical school to interpret them in a purely philosophical and speculative interest, should not blind us to their essentially practical, historical, and, it may even be added, experimental character. The main propositions they contain are those of vv. 14 and 16: 'The word was made flesh and *dwelt among us*, and *we beheld His glory*, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, *full of grace and truth. . . . Of His fulness we all received*, and grace upon grace.' This is entirely in keeping with what we have found in the first epistle; and in spite of the attempts that have been made to find divergent modes of thought in the two documents and to assign them to different hands, the view of Lightfoot still seems to me to have everything in its favour—viz., that the epistle is a sort

of covering letter accompanying and recommending the gospel.[1] The gospel exhibits Jesus in His life in the flesh in precisely that significance for faith which He has in the epistle. There is the same insistence on the flesh, on the historical reality, to which immediate testimony is borne; there is the same emphasis on the conception of Christ as 'Only-begotten,' one who gives others the right to become children of God (1 [12]), but has an incomparable sonship of His own; there is the same sense of owing everything to Him (1 [16]). There is not in the prologue a single word which betrays a purely speculative interest, such as we find, for example, in Philo. There is not a single technical term. The writer has no philosophical problems or conundrums for the solving of which he makes use of the category of the Logos. The one immeasurable reality which fills and holds his mind is Jesus. Jesus has been to him the Interpreter of God (1 [18]): in knowing Him he has known God as he never did before; in seeing Him he has seen the Father: in associating with Him he has been flooded as it were, wave upon wave, with the fulness of grace and truth which dwelt in Him. This is fundamental in the prologue as it stands, and is the key to everything else it contains. Possibly we understand it best by comparing it with the other gospels. To all the evangelists Jesus is a great person, and it lies on them somehow to exhibit and explain His greatness. Mark, who is the earliest, does least. He connects Jesus with John the Baptist, and by a single allusion to the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi, which were fulfilled in the forerunner, leaves us to infer that in Jesus God's ancient purposes are being achieved. Matthew goes further. He introduces Jesus as the Christ, son of David, son of Abraham. He is the key to the whole Jewish history:

[1] *Biblical Essays*, 63, 198.

the one true religion, beginning with the father of the faithful, has its consummation in Him. Luke goes further still. He traces the genealogy of Jesus not to Abraham but to Adam. He is sensible that His significance is not national but universal, and that to appreciate His greatness we must understand His essential relation not only to Israel but to the whole human race. But for John none of these ways of representing the greatness and significance of Jesus is adequate. To exhibit the truth about Him, or rather to exhibit Him in the truth of His being, we must relate Him not to the Baptist merely, or to Abraham, or to the father of mankind, but to the eternal being of God. This is what the writer does by means of the Logos idea, and it is for this purpose alone that he makes use of the idea. He does not arbitrarily assign to Jesus all or any of the functions assigned to the Logos in Heraclitus and the Stoics, or in the Alexandrian philosophy of Philo; in such things he has less than no interest. His heart is where his treasure is, with Jesus. In coming into contact with Jesus he has come into contact with the eternal truth and love of God; the final and all-sufficient revelation of Him whom no man has seen has been made in the Only-begotten. There is nothing in the universe—nothing in nature, in history, in all that has ever been known as religion or revelation—that can truly be understood except in this light (vv. 1–12). The world, as it has been put before, is a Christian world, and we do not understand it finally till everything in it has been set into relation to Christ. To set everything into relation to Christ, under this profound sense of His universal significance, is the purpose of the writer in the opening verses of his gospel. He does so in bold outlines, in a few brief sentences; and he borrows the conception of the Logos for a moment, because in the environment for which he wrote it facilitated

the execution of his purpose. But though he borrows the conception, he does not borrow from it. He does not invest Jesus with an unreal greatness which belongs to this philosophical conception and not to the Person. Jesus is too great for this, and too real; the writer knows Him too well, and his devotion to Him is too absolute; as the gospel itself will show, he can say everything he has to say about Jesus without so much as using the term; and the interest of the prologue for our present purpose is that it puts at the very outset, though in a form that has created some misapprehension, his sense of the divine, eternal, and universal significance of Jesus. At the risk of being tiresome, it may be said once more that he did not borrow this from the Logos; he borrowed the Logos, because it lent itself to the convenient and intelligible expression of this independent Christian conviction. The value of the Logos doctrine for a Christian is that it can be used in this way, and if it ceased to be as convenient or as intelligible to modern readers as it was to Christians of Asia Minor when the gospel was published, its value would be gone.

When we pass from the prologue to the body of the gospel, we are practically in the same world of thought and experience which we know already from the first epistle. The writer himself tells us formally the purpose of his work. 'These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in His name' (ch. 20 [31]). The ultimate aim of the evangelist here is the same with that which we find on the lips of Jesus Himself in c. 10 [10]: 'I am come that they might have life'; and in more solemn and formal terms in ch. 17 [2 f.]: 'Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that all which Thou hast given Him He may give unto them eternal life. And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and

Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.' In view of these passages and others like them which occur on every page, it is hardly worth while investigating the titles by which the evangelist or those who figure in his pages represent to themselves the significance of Jesus—the Christ, the Son of God, the King of Israel, the Son of Man. The Person to whom men owe eternal life is a Person to whom no previously defined name is adequate; whatever term we apply to Him is transfigured by the very application; in contact with Him it fills with a meaning which it never had before. A remarkable proof of this is the way in which Jesus uses of Himself in the gospel the expression ἐγώ εἰμι, 'I am,' without any definite predicate. 'If ye do not believe that I am, ye shall die in your sins' (8 [24]). 'When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am' (8 [28]). 'Henceforth I tell you before it come to pass, that ye may believe when it has come to pass, that I am' (13 [19]). 'The only appropriate supplement in such passages is 'the all decisive personality,' [1] by relation to whom everything in human destiny is determined. Jesus is what He is; no one can reduce this to a finite formula, but everything that we mean by eternal life is dependent upon it.

Sometimes the emphasis in exhibiting what He is falls upon His relation to God. To know the only true God, and Him whom He sent, Jesus Christ, is one (17 [3]). He who has seen Jesus has seen the Father, and there is no other way to see Him. He is in the Father and the Father in Him (14 [9f.]); I and the Father, He says, are one. 'One' is neuter, not masculine: Jesus and the Father constitute one power, by which the salvation of man is secured; He gives his sheep eternal life, and no power can pluck them out of His hand, because no power can pluck anything from the Father's hand, with

[1] Holtzmann, *Handcommentar*, iv. 131.

whom, to this intent, Jesus is identified (10 [30]). Jesus is the only-begotten Son, in the bosom of the Father (1 [18], 3 [16]); He quickens whom He will, and has all judgment committed to Him, that all men may honour the Son even as they honour the Father (5 [21 ff.]). A person so related to God is manifestly incommensurable with others; he is not conceived as the author of the gospel conceived him, he has not the place in our faith which he had in his, if he can be classified with even the greatest and most spiritual men. In some peculiar way he belongs to that side or aspect of reality which we call divine; he does not stand with us in the Christian religion, sharing our worship and our needs, offering on his own behalf the prayers we offer on ours; he confronts us in the life, power, and grace of God.

This absolute significance of Jesus for religion is vividly emphasised not only in His relation to God, but also in all His intercourse with men in the gospel. His relation to them is as incomparable as His relation to His Father. He is always a problem, but He is always suggesting to those around Him solutions of the problem which all the world can understand, and in which all the world is interested. Who is this? the Jews ask. Is it the Christ? How shall we tell whether He is the Christ or not? When the Christ comes, He is to come mysteriously: no one is to know whence He is; but do we not know all about this man's origin? The Christ is to come from Bethlehem; but is not this man a Galilean? The Christ is to renew the miracles of the Exodus and the wilderness; this man has done signs unquestionably, but are they signal enough to attest Him as the Messiah? As against this feeble professional criticism, which whatever else may be said of it must always be the affair of a few, Jesus offers Himself to the universal needs of men. 'I am the bread of life.' 'If any man thirst, let

him come unto me and drink.' 'I am the light of the world.' 'I am the door.' 'I am the good shepherd.' 'I am resurrection and life.' 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' These are not words which it requires theological science to understand; they can only be interpreted by human need, but that secures that they can be understood by all. Whoever knows what it is to be hungry or thirsty, to be in the dark, to be outside, to be forlorn, wandered, dead, may know Jesus. This is the one thing of which the evangelist is sure, that there is no human need, not even the profoundest, which He cannot meet: of His fulness all may receive, and grace upon grace. In this adequacy to all the spiritual needs of the human race Jesus stands as completely alone as He does in His unique relation to the Father. The Saviour of the World (3^{17}, 4^{42}, 12^{47}) can no more be conceived to have a rival or a partner than the only-begotten Son of God.

In examining the first epistle we saw that in the faith of the writer the eternal life which came through Christ was dependent upon His being a propitiation for sins. When he thinks of Jesus as Saviour, it is inevitably in this character that he conceives Him. The view taken in the gospel, it is sometimes alleged, is quite different. Here, it is said, there is no allusion to propitiation; the category which rules the author's thoughts is that of revelation, not that of atonement. Christ brings eternal life by making known the Father, and that is all. But such an interpretation of the gospel is misleading and superficial. There is of course a difference between a gospel and an epistle in every case; the emphasis in them will necessarily fall upon different points. But the fourth gospel, as we have already seen, has more of the character of an epistle than the other three; it is not such an immediate reflection of historical fact; the historical

fact is interpreted and illumined in it by the faith and experience of the writer, and as he himself tells us, by the teaching of the Spirit; and unless we could say beforehand that he was a different man from the author of the epistle —a proposition which has all evidence and probability against it—the presumption must be that on a question so vital the two books will be at one. This is in point of fact the conclusion to which we are led by an impartial examination of the gospel itself. It is a book of testimony to Jesus, and what is the first testimony it presents? It is that of the Baptist in 1^{29}—'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' If any one believes that the Baptist here is only the vehicle for the faith of the evangelist, the argument is unaffected: a lamb by which sin is taken away is nothing but a sacrificial lamb, and the expression covers precisely the same spiritual debt to Christ and dependence upon Him as is covered by ἱλασμός, or propitiation, in the epistle (2^{2}, 4^{10}). Again, at the close of the gospel, in the Johannine parallel to the apostolic commission in Matthew and Luke, we read: 'He breathed on them and said, Receive the Holy Spirit; whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained' (20^{23}). Clearly for the evangelist the forgiveness of sins lies at the heart of the gospel with which the disciples were entrusted as representatives of Jesus, and like everything else in the gospel it must be due to Him.

But not only is this the case, it may be further shown that the particular way in which forgiveness is conceived as due to Jesus is the same in the gospel as in the epistle. Sometimes this comes out quite incidentally, and apart from any intention of the author. It is enough to recall, in illustration, his comment on the counsel of Caiaphas: 'You do not consider that it is for your

interest that one man should die for the nation, and not the whole nation perish' (11 [50]). This, the evangelist adds, he said not of himself, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only but also that He might gather together in one the dispersed children of God. Such a reflection on the brutal or cynical policy of the high priest could never have occurred to any one unless it had been divinely true for him that the death of Jesus was the life of the world. Nay, unless this had been an element of the truth in which as a religious man he lived and moved and had his being, so that it was always present to him without deliberate reflection, it is impossible to see how his comment on Caiaphas should have originated. But this is only another way of saying that the death of Jesus has in the gospel the same place in the writer's faith as it has in the epistle.

As illustrations of the significance which he assigns it in a more conscious fashion we may refer to the great sacramental discourses in the third and sixth chapters, and to the emphatic words about the water and the blood in 19 [34]. It cannot be doubted that the last are to be interpreted in the same sense as the corresponding words, which have a similar and at the first glance a puzzling emphasis, in the epistle (5 [6]: see above, p. 76). There is a reference in both places to the Christian sacraments of Baptism and the Supper which are in the writer's thoughts all through chapter 3 and chapter 6. If we look at chapter 3 connectedly, we see that the death of Christ comes into it precisely as it does into the epistle—indeed, precisely as it does into the epistle to the Romans. Nicodemus is being taught that we must be born again. The necessity of the new birth is the earthly thing which every one might be presumed to understand out of his

own experience: who has not sighed to be another creature than he is? The heavenly thing which it is so hard to understand that the speaker may well despair of finding faith for it, is the possibility and the method of the new birth. No one can explain this heavenly thing but Jesus, and he does it in two sentences. One is that in which he describes it as a being born of water and of the spirit, where there is a reference, which it is not possible for the present writer to question, to Christian baptism and to the reception of the spirit which was its normal accompaniment in the apostolic age. The other is that in which he says, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life.' Apart from the suggestion of the figure, we know what the evangelist meant by the lifting up of the Son of Man: Jesus used this word, he tells us plainly elsewhere (12 [33]), to signify by what death He should die. Unless we are prepared to accuse the author of a rambling incoherence, and of tumbling out sentences which have no connexion with each other and could never find an intelligible context in the mind of his readers, we shall remember that the baptism alluded to in ver. 5 is baptism in the name of Jesus, and specifically, as ver. 14 reminds us, in the name of Jesus who died for us upon the Cross. It is baptism, as Paul expresses it, looking to His death (Rom. 6 [3]). The new birth is mysterious, but not magical. As the evangelist understood it, in its specifically Christian character, it is normally coincident with baptism; it is an experience which comes to men when in penitent faith they cast themselves upon the Son of God uplifted on the Cross—in other words, when they commit themselves to the love which in the Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world by becoming a propitiation

for it. Apart from such a combination of ideas, the discourse with Nicodemus is chaotic and unintelligible, and the mere fact that it is thus made lucid and coherent is sufficient to vindicate this construction. It secures for regeneration a genuinely Christian character by making it depend upon the death of Jesus, and it only gives to that death in this passage the significance claimed for it from 1^{29} to 19^{34}.

Mutatis mutandis, all that has been said of the third chapter in John may be said of the sixth. The Supper is in the author's mind in the one as Baptism is in the other. The subject is Jesus as the bread of life, and the burden of the discourse is put with the utmost generality in ver. 56: 'As the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he shall live because of me.' But the evangelist passes, voluntarily or involuntarily, into the liturgical terminology of the sacrament when he speaks of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man; and once this is recognised, there can be no question as to the reference of such words. Their reference was fixed in the Christian community before this gospel was written, and they connect the life of the Christian with the death of Christ. It is not a passing idea that there is such a connexion; it is a truth embodied in a rite perpetually celebrated—a truth, therefore, never absent from the Christian mind, regarded as of primary and vital importance, recurring to the thoughts spontaneously on the strangest occasions (11^{49} ff.), asserted with the most solemn emphasis (19^{34}, 6^{53}). It is not serious criticism which finds in the fourth gospel a Christ whose significance for faith, as a propitiation for sin, is other than that which meets us in the first epistle of John. The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—the Son of Man uplifted on the Cross as Moses lifted up the Serpent in

the Wilderness—the Only-begotten sent of God as a propitiation for our sins: these are one figure, dominating thought and inspiring faith to precisely the same intent in the epistle and in the gospel. And in this character, as in every other, Jesus stands alone. It is in Him and in His death, in no other person and no other act, that for the New Testament Christian sin is annulled. Here above all, we may say, for New Testament faith, there is none other name.

Summary and Transition

Our investigation of the place which Jesus occupied in the faith of those who wrote the New Testament, and of those whom they addressed, is now complete. To the present writer it is conclusive evidence that in spite of the various modes of thought and feeling which the canonical Christian writings exhibit, there is really such a thing as a self-consistent New Testament, and a self-consistent Christian religion. There is a unity in all these early Christian books which is powerful enough to absorb and subdue their differences, and that unity is to be found in a common religious relation to Christ, a common debt to Him, a common sense that everything in the relations of God and man must be and is determined by Him. We may even go further and say that in all the great types of Christianity represented in the New Testament the relations of God and man are regarded as profoundly affected by sin, and that the sense of a common debt to Christ is the sense of what Christians owe to Him in dealing with the situation which sin has created. This may not involve either a formally identical Christology, or a formally identical doctrine of Propitiation, in every part of the New Testament; but it is the justification of every effort of Christian intelli-

gence to define to itself more clearly who Jesus is and what He has done for our salvation from sin. The New Testament writers did not think of Christology and of the Atonement without sufficient motives, and as long as their sense of debt to Christ survives, the motive for thinking on the same subjects, and surely in the main on the same lines, will survive also. But this is not our interest here. What we have now to ask is whether the religion of the New Testament, consisting as it does in such a peculiar relation to Him as we have seen illustrated in all the documents, can be justified by appeal to Christ Himself. With all its peculiarities, New Testament Christianity claims to rest on a historical basis, and it is a question of supreme importance whether the historical basis which can be provided is adequate to support it. The question is at the present time not only important, but urgent, for the existing Christian Churches, in which the relation of faith to Jesus perpetuates on the whole the New Testament type, are perplexed by voices which call them away from it in different directions. On the one hand, we have our philosophical persons who, on the specious pretext of lifting religion into its proper atmosphere of universal and eternal truth, invite us, as has been already noticed, to dismiss historical considerations entirely. The truths by which Christianity lives are true, it is argued, whatever we may or may not be able to find out about Jesus; they are true, not in Him, but in themselves and in God. It is a mere failure in intelligence — a sort of cowardice, to speak plainly—which makes people nervous about Jesus and the gospels. The Christian religion belongs to a world to which the historical and contingent, even though they should be represented by the life of Jesus, are matters of indifference. It will survive in all that is essential to it though Jesus should entirely disappear.

On the other hand, we have our historical persons, whose views are very different. To get back to Jesus, they tell us, is not the unimportant thing which philosophy would make it. It is vital to get back. But when we do get back, what do we find? Not, according to many of them, anything which justifies the New Testament attitude to Jesus, or which supports what we have just seen to be the New Testament religion. What we find in the historical Jesus is not the author or the object of the Christian faith known to history, but a child of God like ourselves—a pious, humble, good man, who called others to trust the Father as He trusted, and to be children of God like Him. The Christian religion is not thus left to us, with the added advantage that it is historically secured; when the historical basis is laid bare, it is seen that the Christian religion cannot be sustained upon it. The Christian religion has been a mistake, a delusion, from the beginning; our duty is to revert from it to the religion of Jesus Himself, to cast away the primitive Christian faith and its testimony, and to fall back upon the pattern believer. It is obvious that there is something dogmatic in both these appeals to the Church; there is a theory of religion, of history, and of reality in general, implied alike in the philosophical appeal which would give us a Christianity without Jesus, and in the historical one which would give us a Jesus who could take no responsibility for anything that has ever been called Christian. The writer has no such confidence in either theory as would justify him in assenting off-hand to the stupendous impeachment of Providence which is implied in both. It is easy enough to admit that there may have been errors of every kind in the historical development of Christianity. The adherents of the new religion may have made intellectual blunders and moral ones, and no doubt made

both. Once, too, the possibility of going astray is admitted, it is impossible to limit it; if there can be such a thing as wandering, there may be wandering very far. But what it is not easy to admit is that Christianity itself, in the only form in which it has ever existed and functioned as a religion among men, has been a mistake and misconception from the first. This is the ultimate meaning of these 'historical' and 'philosophical' appeals to the Church, and it certainly needs courage to assent to them when their meaning is perceived. Less courageous men, or perhaps we may be allowed to say men with a larger perception of what is involved, will feel bound to proceed with less precipitation. It is not self-evident that eternal truth, or rather our grasp and apprehension of it, can be in no way historically conditioned. It is not self-evident that no historical person could really sustain the phenomenon of the Christian religion. Dismissing the summary and *à priori* decisions in which courageous spirits lay down the law beforehand to a world of which we know so little, it is our duty to raise the second of the two questions with which this discussion opened, and to examine it as disinterestedly and as thoroughly as the first. It is the question, Does Jesus, as He is revealed to us in history, justify the Christian religion as we have had it exhibited to us in the New Testament?

BOOK II

THE HISTORICAL BASIS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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The question which has just been stated might be approached in various ways. We might begin with an investigation of the sources to which we owe our knowledge of Jesus, build up by degrees such an acquaintance with Him as could be formed in this way, and then consider what relation it bore to the place He holds in New Testament faith. A moment's reflection on what has preceded will show the insufficiency and the impropriety of this method. The primary testimony of the disciples to Jesus was their testimony to His resurrection: except as Risen and Exalted they never preached Jesus at all. It was His Resurrection and Exaltation which made Him Lord and Christ, and gave Him His place in their faith and life; and unless their testimony to this fundamental fact can be accepted, it is not worth while to carry the investigation further. Nothing that Jesus was or did, apart from the Resurrection, can justify or sustain the religious life which we see in the New Testament. Those who reject the apostolic testimony at this point may, indeed, have the highest appreciation for the memory of Jesus; they may reverence the figure preserved for us by the evangelists as the ideal of humanity, the supreme attainment of the race in the field of character; but they can have no relation to Jesus resembling that in which New Testament Christians lived and moved and had their being. The general

question, therefore, whether Jesus, as He is known to us from history, can sustain the Christian religion as it is exhibited to us in the New Testament, takes at the outset this special form: Can we accept the testimony which we have to the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus?

I

THE RESURRECTION

It is possible, as every one knows, to decline to raise this question. There is a dogmatic conception of history which tells us beforehand that there cannot be in history any such event as the resurrection of Jesus is represented in the New Testament to be: no possible or conceivable evidence could prove it. With such a dogma, which is part of a conception of reality in general, it is impossible to argue; for he who holds it cannot but regard it as a supreme standard by which he is bound to test every argument alleged against it. It is not for him an isolated and therefore a modifiable opinion; it is part of the structure of intelligence to which all real opinions will conform. But, though it is vain to controvert such a dogma by argument, it may be demolished by collision with facts; and it is surely the less prejudiced method to ask what it is that the New Testament witnesses assert, and what is the value of their testimony. Men's minds have varied about the structure of intelligence and about its constitutive or regulative laws, and it is one of the elementary principles of learning to recognise that reality is larger than any individual intelligence, and that the growth of intelligence depends on its recognition of this truth. It is quite conceivable that the fundamental fact on which the life of New Testament Christianity rests, is

abruptly rejected by many, under the constraint of some such dogma, while yet they have no clear idea either of the fact itself, as the New Testament represents it, or of the evidence on which it was originally believed and has been believed by multitudes ever since. And if it is important, looking to those who deny that such an event as the resurrection of Jesus can have taken place, or is capable of proof, to present the facts bearing on the subject as simply, clearly, and fully as possible, it is no less important to do so in view of those who are so preoccupied with the spiritual significance of the resurrection that they are willing (it might seem) to ignore the fact as of comparatively little or, indeed, of no account. When Harnack, for example, distinguishes the Easter Faith from the Easter Message, he practically takes this latter position. The Easter Faith is 'the conviction of the victory of the crucified over death, of the power and the righteousness of God, and of the life of Him who is the first-born among many brethren.' This is the main thing, and just because it is a faith it is not really dependent on the Easter Message, which deals with the empty grave, the appearances to the disciples, and so forth. We can keep the faith without troubling about the message. 'Whatever may have happened at the grave and in the appearances, one thing is certain: from this grave the indestructible faith in the conquest of death and in an eternal life has taken its origin.'[1] Sympathising as we must with Harnack's genuinely evangelistic desire to leave nothing standing between the mind of the age and the hope of the gospel which can possibly be put away, we may nevertheless doubt whether the Easter Faith and the Easter Message are so indifferent to each other. They were not unrelated at the beginning, and if we reflect on the fact that they are generally

[1] *Das Wesen des Christentums*, 101 f.

rejected together, it may well seem precipitate to assume that they are independent of each other now. To say that the faith produced the message—that Jesus rose again in the souls of His disciples, in their resurgent faith and love, and that this, and this alone, gave birth to all the stories of the empty grave and the appearances of the Lord to His own—is to pronounce a purely dogmatic judgment. What underlies it is not the historical evidence as the documents enable us to reach it, but an estimate of the situation dictated by a philosophical theory which has discounted the evidence beforehand. It is not intended here to meet dogma with dogma, but to ask what the New Testament evidence is, what it means, and what it is worth.

Much of the difficulty and embarrassment of the subject is due to the fact that the study of the evidences for the resurrection has so often begun at the wrong end. People have started with the narratives in the evangelists and become immersed in the details of these, with all the intricate and perhaps insoluble questions they raise, both literary and historical. Difficulties at this point have insensibly but inevitably become difficulties in their minds attaching to the resurrection, and affecting their whole attitude to New Testament religion. It ought to be apparent that, so far as the fact of the resurrection of Jesus is concerned, the narratives of the evangelists are quite the least important part of the evidence with which we have to deal. It is no exaggeration to say that if we do not accept the resurrection on grounds which lie outside this area, we shall not accept it on the grounds presented here. The real historical evidence for the resurrection is the fact that it was believed, preached, propagated, and produced its fruit and effect in the new phenomenon of the Christian Church, long before any of our gospels was written. This is not said

to disparage the gospels, or to depreciate what they tell, but only to put the question on its true basis. Faith in the resurrection was not only prevalent but immensely powerful before any of our New Testament books was written. Not one of them would ever have been written but for that faith. It is not this or that in the New Testament—it is not the story of the empty tomb, or of the appearing of Jesus in Jerusalem or in Galilee—which is the primary evidence for the resurrection; it is the New Testament itself. The life that throbs in it from beginning to end, the life that always fills us again with wonder as it beats upon us from its pages, is the life which the Risen Saviour has quickened in Christian souls. The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is the existence of the Church in that extraordinary spiritual vitality which confronts us in the New Testament. This is its own explanation of its being. 'He,' says Peter, 'hath poured forth this which ye both see and hear' (Acts 2 [33]); and, apart from all minuter investigations, it is here the strength of the case for the resurrection rests. The existence of the Christian Church, the existence of the New Testament: these incomparable phenomena in human history are left without adequate or convincing explanation if the resurrection of Jesus be denied. If it be said that they can be explained, not by the resurrection itself but by faith in the resurrection, that raises the question, already alluded to, of the origin of such faith. Does it originate in the soul itself, in memories of Jesus, in spiritual convictions about what must have been the destiny of a spirit so pure? Or were there experiences of another kind, independent historical matters of fact, by which it was generated and to which it could appeal? Was it, in short, a self-begotten Easter Faith, which produced the Easter Message in the way of self-support or self-defence; or was there an independent

God-given Easter Message which evoked the Easter Faith? We could not ask a more vital question, and fortunately there are in the New Testament abundant materials to answer it.

The oldest testimony we have to the resurrection of Jesus, apart from that fundamental evidence just alluded to as pervading the New Testament, is contained in 1 Cor. 15. The epistle is dated by Sanday[1] in the spring of 55, and represents what Paul had taught in Corinth when he came to the city for the first time between 50 and 52; but these dates taken by themselves might only mislead. For what Paul taught in Corinth was the common Christian tradition (ver. 3 ff.); he had been taught it himself when he became a Christian, and in his turn he transmitted it to others. But Paul became a Christian not very long after the death of Christ—according to Harnack one year after, to Ramsay three or four, to Lightfoot perhaps six or seven.[2] At a date so close to the alleged events we find that the fundamental facts of Christianity as taught in the primitive circle were these—that Christ died for our sins; that He was buried; that He rose on the third day and remains in the state of exaltation; and that He appeared to certain persons. The mention of the burial is important in this connexion as defining what is meant by the rising. We see from it that it would have conveyed no meaning to Paul or to any member of the original Christian circle to say that it was the spirit of Christ which rose into new life, or that He rose again in the faith of His devoted followers, who could not bear the thought that for Him death should end all. The rising is relative to the grave and the burial, and if we cannot speak of a bodily resurrection we should not speak of resurrection at all. In

[1] *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 903 f.
[2] See article 'Chronology' in Hastings *Bible Dictionary*, i. p. 424.

the same connexion also we should notice the specification of the third day. This is perfectly definite, and it is perfectly guaranteed. The third day was the first day of the week, and every Sunday as it comes round is a new argument for the resurrection. The decisive event in the inauguration of the new religion took place on that day—an event so decisive and so sure that it displaced even the Sabbath, and made not the last but the first day of the week that which Christians celebrated as holy to the Lord. The New Testament references to the first day of the week as the Lord's day (Acts 20^{7}, Rev. 1^{10}) are weighty arguments for the historical resurrection; that is, for a resurrection which has a place and weight among datable events.[1]

An important light is cast on Paul's conception of the resurrection of Jesus by his use, in speaking of it, of the perfect tense (ἐγήγερται)—'He hath been raised.' Christ rose, it signifies, and remains in the risen state. Death has no more dominion over Him. His resurrection was not like the raisings from the dead recorded in the gospels, where restoration to the old life and its duties and necessities is even made prominent, and where the final prospect of death remains. Jesus does not come back to the old life at all. As risen, He belongs already to another world, to another mode of being. The resurrection is above all things the revelation of life in this new order, a life which has won the final triumph over

[1] The curious idea, which has now become a tradition among a certain class of scholars, that the date of the resurrection is due, not to anything which took place on the first day of the week, but to the prophecy of Hosea (6^{2})—'After two days will He revive us; on the third day He will raise us up and we shall live before Him'—ought surely to be disposed of by the consideration that there is no allusion to this text in connexion with the resurrection, either in the New Testament itself, or (so far as the writer is aware) in any other quarter, earlier than the nineteenth century. Curious, however, as this idea is, it is not so entirely extraordinary as Schmiedel's suggestion (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, 4067) that the date of the resurrection is deduced from 2 Kings 20^{5}.

sin and death. This was thoroughly understood by the original witnesses; the resurrection of Jesus, or the anticipated resurrection of Christians as dependent upon it, was no return to nature and to the life of the world; it was the manifestation, transcending nature, of new life from God.

In the passage with which we are dealing, indeed, Paul enters into no further particulars of any kind. He recites a list of persons to whom Jesus had appeared—Cephas, the Twelve, more than five hundred brethren at once, James, all the apostles, himself. It is a fair inference from the mode of this enumeration that the appearances are given in their chronological order, but it is quite unwarranted to say[1] that Paul in this list guarantees not only chronological order but completeness. The list gives us no ground for saying that when Paul was in contact with the Jerusalem Church its testimony to the resurrection included no such stories of the appearing of Jesus to women as are now found in our gospels. Neither did the purpose for which Paul adduced this series of witnesses require him to do more than mention their names as those of persons who had seen the Lord. It was the fact of the resurrection which was denied at Corinth—the resurrection of Christians, in the first instance, but by implication, as Paul believed, that of Jesus also—and a simple assertion of the fact was what he wanted to meet the case. This is adequately given when he recites in succession a series of persons to whom the Lord had appeared. That he says nothing more than that to these persons the Lord did appear is no proof that he had nothing more to say. He could, no doubt, have told a great deal more about that last appearance which the Lord had made to himself, if he had thought it relevant; and the probabilities are that in this outline

[1] With Schmiedel (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, 4058).

of his gospel and of the evidence on which it rested, he is merely reminding the Corinthians in a summary fashion of what he had enlarged upon in all its circumstances and significance when he was among them. The term ὤφθη (He appeared), which is used alike in speaking of Christ's appearing to Paul and to the others who had the same experience, does not enable us to define that experience with any precision. It is used elsewhere, certainly, of 'visionary' seeing, but it is used equally, for example, in Acts 7[26], of seeing which is in no sense visionary. What it suggests in almost every case is the idea of something sudden or unexpected; that which is seen is conceived to be so, not because one is looking at it or for it, but because it has unexpectedly thrust itself upon the sight. The translation 'He appeared,' rather than 'He was seen,' adequately represents this. But though Paul can use the active form, as in ch. 9[1]—'Have not I seen Jesus our Lord?'—neither by that nor by the passive does he do more than convey the fact that he had had, in what he can only describe in terms of vision, an experience in which he was conscious of the presence of the Risen Saviour.

Into this experience we may not be able to penetrate, but we are entitled to reject explanations of it which assume it to be a mere illusion. Such as it was, it left Paul in no doubt that Jesus of Nazareth, who had been crucified at Calvary, was exalted to the right hand of God in divine power and glory. Power and glory are the two words which the apostle most frequently uses in speaking of the resurrection. The Risen Jesus is the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2[8]). He was declared or constituted Son of God in power by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1[4]). He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6[4]). The working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when

He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world but also in that which is to come—this was the supreme manifestation of what the power of God could do. Paul has no abstract term like omnipotence, and when he wishes to give a practical religious equivalent for it he points to the power which has raised Christ from the grave and set Him on the throne with all things under His feet. The power which has done this is the greatest which the apostle can conceive; it is the power which works in us, and it is great enough for every need of the soul (Ephes. 3^{20}, $1^{19\,f.}$). In one passage he uses the expression 'the body of His glory' (Phil. 3^{21}). The Risen Lord, in contrast with mortal men upon the earth, who bear about a 'body of humiliation' or 'lowliness,' lives in the splendour and immortality of heaven. It is no use asking for a definition of such words: Paul could no more have given them than we can. It is no use asking for an explanation of the precise relation between the body of humiliation and the body of glory; such an explanation was entirely out of his reach. All he could have asserted, and what he undoubtedly did assert, was that the same Jesus whose body had been broken on the cross had manifested Himself to him in divine splendour and power; and though he should never be able to say anything about the connexion of the two modes of being further than this, that Jesus had been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, it would not in the least affect his assurance that the exaltation of Jesus was as real as His crucifixion. If any one wished to argue that for Paul's belief in the resurrection of Christ, the empty tomb in Joseph's garden is immaterial, he might make a plausible case; the apostle's certainty of the resurrection

rested immediately and finally on the appearing of Jesus to himself, and he would have possessed that certainty and lived in it though he had never become acquainted with the circumstances of the death and burial of Jesus, and with the subsequent events as they are recorded in the gospels. But the whole of the discussion in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians shows that, though a plausible case could be stated on these lines, it is not the case for which we could claim the support of the apostle himself. Unable as he is to explain the relation of the natural to the spiritual body, of the body of humiliation to the body of glory—a 'mystery' (ver. 51) can only be announced, it cannot be explained—his assumption throughout is certainly not that the two have nothing to do with each other. It is the body of humiliation itself which in the case of Christians is transformed and fashioned like the body of Christ's glory; and it is this, rather than the idea that there is no connexion between the two bodies, which suggests the line on which the apostle's own thoughts would run.

But what, it may be said, is the value, historically speaking, of such evidence as this to the resurrection of Jesus? Grant that Paul and the other persons whom he enumerates had experiences which they announced to the world in the terms, 'We have seen the Lord,' the question as to the nature of these experiences remains. In the Christian religion one interpretation has been put upon them. They have been regarded as historical and independent guarantees of a transcendent world, a life beyond death, the sovereignty of Jesus, the reconciliation of the sinful world and God. But is this interpretation necessary? No one any longer questions the honesty of the apostolic testimony to the resurrection: the only question is as to its meaning and value. There can be no doubt that appearances did appear to certain

persons; the problem is how are we to give such appearances their proper place and interpretation in the whole scheme of things? Is it not much more probable that they are to be explained from within, from the moods of thought and feeling in the souls which experienced them, than from anything so inconceivable, and so incommensurable with experience, as the intrusion of another world into this? Is it not much more probable, in short, that they were what philosophers call 'subjective,' states or products of the soul itself, and not 'objective,' realities independent of the soul? This is not equivalent to denying them any reality, though it relieves us from the necessity of discussing such questions as the empty tomb. Neither does it impair the greatness of Jesus. On the contrary, it may even be urged that it magnifies Jesus. How great this man must have been who could not be extinguished even by death, but who had made an impression on the minds of His friends so profound and ineffaceable, who had inspired them with faith and hope in Himself so vivid and invincible, that He rose in their hearts out of the gloom and despair of the crucifixion to celestial glory and sovereignty! This is a line of argument which is constantly and powerfully urged at the present time, and that too by many who are far from wanting sympathy with the life and teaching of Jesus. This is of itself a reason which entitles it to the most careful consideration. But it demands attention further because it is clear that, if it leaves anything at all which can be called Christian religion, it is not that form of Christianity which alone we have been able to discover in the New Testament.

Without professing or feeling any undue sympathy with the Paley or Old Bailey school of apologetics, we may surely have our doubts as to whether the testimony of the first witnesses can be so easily disposed of. Prac-

tically this estimate of it means that it is to be treated as a pathological phenomenon: it belongs to the disease and disorder, not to the health and sanity of the human spirit. Paul and the other apostles no doubt had visions of Jesus in power and glory, but they ought not to have had them. Unless their brains had been overheated they would not have had them. It can never be anything but a pity that they did have them. There are people who say such things because their philosophy constrains them, and there are people also, equally entitled to have an opinion, who would not say such things for any philosophy. It is not easy to discredit offhand, as mere illusion, what has meant so much in the life of the human race. It is not easy to suppose that men, who in other respects were quite of sound mind, were all in this extraordinary experience victims of the same delusion. There are, of course, things which no testimony could establish; but where there is, as here, a great mass of testimony, and that in conditions which compel us to treat it seriously, it is, to say the least, rash to put upon it an interpretation which annuls completely the significance it had for the witnesses themselves.

It is at this point, therefore, that we must take into account those considerations which gave weight from the beginning to the apostolic testimony, and won acceptance for it. If the resurrection of Jesus could be treated purely as a question in metaphysics, and the witness of the apostles purely as a question in psychology, we should find ourselves confronted with insoluble difficulties. A theory of the universe which had no room for the resurrection would find in psychology the means of reducing the evidence; those who could not reduce the evidence would plead for a more elastic view of the universe; but the issue would never be decided.

If, however, we leave these abstractions behind us, and come face to face with the facts, the situation is entirely changed. The resurrection is not attested to metaphysicians or psychologists as a thing in itself; it is preached to sinful men, in its divine significance for their salvation, and it is in this concrete reality alone that it exists or has interest for the primitive witnesses. 'Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins' (Acts 5^{31}). 'And He charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is He which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead' (Acts 10^{42}). The considerations which are thus brought into the scale, it is easy to caricature and easy to abuse, but fatal to neglect. Any one who appeals to them is sure to be charged with shifting his ground, with evading the issue, with μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος, and all the other devices of the apologist at his wits' end; nay, he may even be represented as saying to his supposed adversary, '*I* believe this because I am accessible to spiritual considerations, and you disbelieve it because you are not; if you were as good a man as I am, you would believe it too.' But it is surely possible, without being either complacent or censorious, certainly without making any personal comparisons, to view the testimony to the resurrection not as an abstract or insulated phenomenon, but in the totality of the relations in which it was delivered; and if these relations include some which are specifically moral, so that the attitude of men to the evidence was from the beginning and must ever be, in part at least, morally conditioned, it is surely possible to say so without being either a Pharisee or an intellectually dishonest man.

Now there are three ways in which the testimony to the resurrection is morally qualified, if one may so speak,

and therefore needs to be morally appreciated. In the first place, it is the resurrection of Jesus. If the witnesses had asserted about Herod, or about any ordinary person, what they did about Jesus, the presumption would have been all against them. The moral incongruity would have discredited their testimony from the first. But the resurrection was that of one in whom His friends had recognised, while He lived, a power and goodness beyond the common measure of humanity, and they were sensible when it took place that it was in keeping with all they had known, hoped, and believed of Him. When Peter is reported to have said that God loosed the pangs of death because it was not possible that He should be holden of it (Acts 2^{24}), it is not too much to infer that this was the truth present to his mind. Is it too much to infer that sometimes, when the resurrection of Jesus is rejected, the rejecter forgets that it is this resurrection which is in question? He thinks of resurrection in general, the resurrection of any one; possibly he thinks of it really as the re-animation of a corpse; and he judges quite confidently, and if this be all that is in his mind quite rightly, that it is not worth while weighing anything so light against a well-founded conception of reality in general. But if he realised what 'Jesus' means—if he had present to his mind and conscience, in His incomparable moral value, the Person whose resurrection is declared—the problem would be quite different. He might find himself far more ready, under the impression of the worth of such a person, to question the finality of his scheme of the universe; more willing to admit that if there was not to be a perpetual contradiction at the heart of things, a perpetual extinction of the higher by the lower, such a personality must find it possible somehow to transcend the limitations of nature and its laws.

This consideration, it may be said, is capable of being turned in the opposite direction. Those who hold that Jesus only rose again in the hearts of His disciples may assert that they put to the proper account whatever truth it contains. They admit that only Jesus could have risen, only a person who had so wonderfully impressed Himself on the memory and affections of His followers; but it was this wonderfully deep and vivid impression which itself produced the resurrection. Death, for a moment, so to speak, had extinguished Jesus in their lives, but the extinction could not be lasting. Very soon He reasserted His power. He came to life again more triumphant than ever. One may venture to think that in all this there is much confusion, and even much playing with words, in a style quite unworthy of what is at stake. To lose a dear and valued friend is no uncommon experience, and we know how to describe what follows. Those who do not forget their departed friends remember them. But to remember them means to recall them as they were; it means to have them present to our minds in the familiar associations of the past. We may say if we please that they live in our memory; if we have been so unhappy as to forget them, and then remember them once more, we may say that they have come to life again in our memory; but it is the old familiar friend who so comes to life. There is no revelation here, no suggestion of being in a new and higher order, nothing, in spite of the language of life and death in which it is expressed, which has any analogy whatever with the resurrection of Jesus. Hence we may say confidently that no brooding of His friends on the memory of Jesus would have given that revival to His personality which they asserted when they preached the resurrection. Their sense of the greatness and the worth of Jesus, in all probability, would come back

on them and fill their minds in the hours which followed His death; but though this prepared them in a manner for His appearance, it had no tendency whatever to produce it. Jesus did not appear as they had known Him, in the lowliness and familiarity of the life they had shared in Galilee; He appeared as one exalted to the right hand of God, and having all power given Him in heaven and on earth. Their belief that such an appearing was no illusion, but the revelation of the final truth about Jesus, was morally conditioned, no doubt, by their previous knowledge and appreciation of Him; but it is hardly short of unmeaning to say that their previous knowledge and appreciation of Him evoked it in their minds. It was no coming to life again in memory of the dear familiar friend whom even death could not dislodge from the heart; it was something transcendently and unimaginably new, and it needs a cause proportioned to it to explain its presence.

To say that the testimony to the resurrection is morally qualified by the mere fact that it is the resurrection of *Jesus* which is attested does not exhaust the truth. The apostles did not preach the resurrection of Jesus itself as a mere fact; what they preached was the gospel of the resurrection. It was the fact read out to the mind, heart, and conscience of men in its divine significance—the fact and its interpretation as indissolubly one, and constituting a supreme appeal on the part of God to man. If we could imagine a person to whom all the ideas and experiences which for the first witnesses were part and parcel of their faith in the exaltation of Jesus were meaningless or unreal; a person who had no interest in the forgiveness of sins or in judgment to come; to whom a life like that of Jesus, ending in a death like His, presented no problem, or none that much disturbed his soul; to whom it was not a matter of any

moment to be assured that sin and death were not the final realities in the universe, but were destined to be swallowed up in victory—if one could imagine such a person, we should have imagined one to whom the resurrection must be permanently incredible. He could not believe it, because, to begin with, he could not even conceive it. He could have no idea of what those who attested it had in their minds; and even if he accepted something which did not transcend his conception of the 'purely' historical, some bare fact with none but a metaphysical significance, it would not amount to believing in the resurrection in the sense of the New Testament. No one can really appreciate the testimony unless the moral conditions under which its meaning is realised are to some extent real for him.

It is possible, as has been already noticed, to caricature this truth on the one side, and to abuse it on the other. Those who reject the resurrection caricature it when they say that it is a mere evasion, an attempt to prove what is either a historical fact or nothing by evidence which is not historical at all; and those who accept the resurrection abuse it when they presume to judge others on the ground of it, and insinuate that their unbelieving attitude is due to their insensibility to the spiritual truths which the gospel of the resurrection embodies. But when we bring into view the fact that the testimony to the resurrection is morally qualified in the way which has just been described, we do not disregard the testimony itself. The primary fact is that we have such testimony. There were really men in the world who stood forth before their fellows and said 'We have seen the Lord.' That is fundamental, and must always be so. There is no attempt to make inward evidence take the place of outward—no argument that the witness of the Spirit, as theologians have called it,

can establish a historical fact; what is asserted is that the historical testimony to the resurrection of Jesus is testimony to a fact of moral significance, a fact of such a kind that the testimony to it cannot be duly appreciated, even in respect to its credibility, by a person for whom its moral significance has no interest. This is not a way of asserting that the resurrection is historical, and at the same time securing it against historical criticism; it is only pointing out, what is surely the case, that the historical fact with which we are here concerned must be taken as what the historical witnesses represent it to be, and not as something different—as the concrete and significant reality which it was for them, and not as an abstract and isolated somewhat, which has no significance whatever. Perhaps if 'man' could be reduced to 'historian' or 'natural philosopher' the resurrection might remain for ever a mere puzzle to the brain; all that the considerations with which we are here concerned import is that this reduction is impossible. 'Man' is more than 'natural philosopher' or 'historian.' His relations to reality are more various and complex than those of such scientific abstractions, and, therefore, his power of responding to it, of apprehending and comprehending it, is greater. Neither nature nor history is invaded in its rights by the resurrection, but both are transcended. Neither natural science nor history can deny the resurrection except by claiming for themselves to exhaust the truth and reality of the universe—a claim the untruth of which is self-evident. It is just because of its moral significance—because of its meaning and purpose in the relations of God and man—that the resurrection, as the apostles preached it, rises above what is called the purely historical; it makes a kind of appeal to men which a purely historical event, if we could realise such an abstraction, never makes; it is on our susceptibility to

this appeal that our appreciation of the testimony to it depends, and yet the testimony itself, in the last resort, is historical testimony. There would be nothing to go upon whatever if there were not men who had seen the risen Jesus—here is the point of attachment with history; but what the testimony of these men shall amount to for us—what weight it shall have in our minds—whether we shall take it as simply as it is given, or feel ourselves obliged to attempt the reduction of it to something by which the equilibrium of our world shall be maintained and disturbing revelations excluded—here is the point at which the moral elements in the case exert their legitimate influence. To see this and to say it is not to be Pharisaical, even if one believes in the resurrection. It gives no right to judge others. It is necessary, however, that the preacher of the resurrection should be conscious of it, otherwise he may preach something which is out of touch with the apostolic gospel of the Risen Christ—something which attempts more than the first witnesses attempted, a demonstration of the fact apart from its significance; something, too, which is less interesting than their message, a fact so emptied of divine and human meaning that it defies the intelligence instead of appealing to the whole man.

About the third way in which the evidence for the resurrection is morally qualified there can hardly be any dispute. If the alleged fact had been insulated in human history, if it had been ineffective and fruitless, it might well have been questioned whether it were a fact at all. But from the very beginning men were persuaded that the resurrection was a fact, because they saw it operate as a moral power. It has been said already that the supreme evidence for the resurrection is the existence of the Church in the fulness of that exuberant life which we see in the apostolic writings. And

this was understood from the first. The sermon of Peter in Acts 2 is conscious of all the moral qualifications which we have reviewed. The primary historical fact of course is that the Lord had appeared to Peter and those for whom he spoke: they were witnesses of His resurrection. But Peter knew the weight which his word would receive from his appreciation of the character of Jesus: 'it was not possible that *He* should be holden of death.' He knew the added power with which it would tell when the Risen Christ was preached at the author of reconciliation to God: 'repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of your sins.' He knew that he gave conclusive evidence of the exaltation of Jesus when he pointed to the spiritual phenomena of the early Christian days: 'He hath poured forth this which ye both see and hear.' We must not narrow unduly the application of the last words. If we thought of nothing but speaking with tongues, and took our ideas of this from Paul, we should probably not rate it very high. But 'this that ye both see and hear' covers the whole phenomena of that eventful time. The wonder of it was not that the apostles spoke in foreign languages, but that they spoke; men who had till then been silent or rather dumb opened their lips, and preached with tongues of fire. With great power they gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. This is the truly significant thing, the transformation of the apostles and the birth of the Church. What we think of the apostolic testimony to the resurrection cannot but be influenced by our estimate of these moral phenomena and of the mode of their causation. The greater they appear, the more valuable in their spiritual contents, the more decisive in the history of humanity, so much the more inevitable must it seem that what lies behind them is not an illusion

or a morbid experience misunderstood, but the highest reality and truth which have ever told with regenerating power on the life of man. Yet here again a straightforward mind is bound to guard the argument from reproach by making it quite clear that there is no desire to evade any historical issue. There are historical witnesses: to that we must always recur. The moral phenomena to which reference has been made are transacted on the stage of history. But something in our appreciation of the witnesses will always depend on our appreciation of the moral phenomena; and it is not scientific conscientiousness, but philosophical perversity, which tries to ignore the obvious truth. Surely it only needs to be stated that the man to whom Christian history and the New Testament life are the divinest things he can conceive, and the man to whom they are meaningless or even pathological phenomena, must take different views of what their earliest representatives attest as their cause. In this sense, it is fair enough to say that belief in the resurrection is a value-judgment. But it is not implied, when the word is used in this sense, that the resurrection never took place, and that we cannot speak of historical evidence in connexion with it.

It is well worth remarking that in the earliest great discussion of this subject—that in the first epistle to the Corinthians—Paul does justice to both the historical and the spiritual evidence for the resurrection, and sets the two in their proper relation to each other. The historical evidence comes first. 'He appeared to Peter, then to the Twelve . . . He appeared to me also.' It cannot be repeated too often that this is fundamental. If there had not been men who could say this, there would never have been such a thing in the world as Christian life, with the evidence for the resurrection which it brings. Unless the apostolic testimony among men, supported

as it was by the spiritual power with which it was delivered, had commanded faith, the Christian religion could never have come to be. There is the exaggeration of paradox in a saying like Mr. Inge's[1] that 'religion, when it confines itself strictly to its own province, never speaks in the past tense. It is concerned only with what is, not with what was. History as history is not its business.' Paul spoke in the past tense when he said, 'He appeared unto me.' If we drop *what was* out of *what is*, how much is left? The true case of any one who believes in the resurrection is not that 'history as history' is not the business of religion; but that, as Paul says about older idols, 'history as history' is nothing in the world. If Jesus actually rose, as Paul attests on the ground that He appeared to him in His exaltation, we may require to enlarge our conception of the historical, but we cannot say that religion and history are independent of each other. This is very far from the mind of Paul. The apostle never argues that 'the real basis of our belief in the resurrection of Christ is a great psychological fact—a spiritual experience.'[2] The resurrection must certainly be attested, if it is to win faith, by witnesses like Peter and Paul who have been spiritually transformed by it; if the appearing of Jesus had made no difference to them, if it had left them the men they were before, no one would have believed them when they told He had appeared. But testimony does not cease to be testimony when it is delivered by men who have been themselves transformed by what they attest. The truth does not cease to be independently true when its power is demonstrated in its moral workings, and we must take care that the desire to put Christianity on a basis independent of history, a

[1] In *Contentio Veritatis*, p. 90.
[2] Inge, *ut supra*, p. 87.

basis beyond the reach of historical doubt, does not lead us to withdraw from under it the only basis on which it has ever been sustained.

Premising this, however, it is of extreme interest to notice how Paul adds to the direct historical testimony for the resurrection an indirect spiritual evidence which in its place is of the highest value. To put it broadly, Christian experience in all its forms implies the resurrection. State the content of this experience as you will, take any aspect or illustration of it you please, and if you deny the resurrection, instead of being the highest and truest form of human life, such experience must be considered a thing illegitimate, abnormal, delusive. All through his argument Paul employs the *reductio ad absurdum*. At first he states his case quite indefinitely: 'if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain too' (1 Cor. 15 [14]). Vain, κενόν, means empty, with nothing in it. Whatever is to be said of Paul's preaching, we surely cannot say this. A nature so powerful and passionate as his cannot be raised to the most intense action, and sustained in it through life, by that which has nothing in it. A preaching that so stimulated the intelligence of the preacher himself, that put the irresistible constraint on him which he so often describes,[1] that carried away the auditors as it swept upon them 'in power and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance' (1 Thess. 1 [5]) must have had something in it. It must have had behind it a power corresponding in character and in force to the effects which it produced both in the apostle and his audience; and that power, as Paul apprehended it, was the power of the Risen Saviour. But the apostle proceeds to give a more special point to this general truth. 'If Christ is not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.' Vain is in this

[1] See 1 Cor. 9 [16], 2 Cor. 5 [13f.], Acts 18 [5]—this last also at Corinth.

place ματαία, not κενή, futile or to no purpose, rather than having nothing in it. Your faith means your Christianity, your new religion. The great blessing it has brought you is, as you imagine, reconciliation to God; as believers, you are no longer in your sins; in the consciousness of reconciliation to God they are annulled both in their guilt and in their power; the regenerative pardon of God in Christ has made you new creatures. But this regenerative pardon *is* the pardon of God in Christ: it is preached to men in the Risen Lord who died for sin, and who sends His spirit to those who believe in Him; apart from this Risen Lord it has no legitimacy, no reality at all. But who will dare to say that the consciousness of reconciliation to God, which is the essence of all Christian experience, the inspiration of all Christian praise, the spring of all Christian life, is no more than an illusion? To Christians, at all events, it is more real than anything else which human beings call reality, and its reality stands and falls with that of the resurrection. There may be morbid phenomena in the Christian life, as in life on every plane, and no doubt there are; but to say that the Christian life itself, in that which is most intimately characteristic of it, is nothing but a morbid phenomenon, is too much. At all events it was too much for Paul. For him the doxologies in which men who were no longer in their sins celebrated the living Lord who had redeemed them were not wild and whirling words: they were the only words in which utterance was given to the final truth of life.

And he has still other ways in which he can press his case. If Christ is not risen, 'then they also who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished.' Paul had seen men fall asleep in Christ. He had watched Stephen stoned, and heard him cry, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' He

had seen our poor human nature, in mortal weakness, lay hold of the immortal love of God in Christ, and through faith in Him triumph over the last enemy. He believed that there was nothing on earth so priceless as such faith, nothing so real and so honouring to God. He could not believe that it was in vain. God would be ashamed of such people, to be called their God, unless their hope of immortality was made good. He would be unworthy of their trust. But such hope was inspired by the resurrection of Jesus; it is only through the resurrection it can be satisfied; and therefore for Paul who so judges, and for all who share his appreciation of the dying Christian's faith, the resurrection is as certain as the fidelity of God to those who trust Him even in death. The final turn which the apostle gives to his argument has been much censured by superior moralists: 'if in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' The enlightened multitude which has advanced so far as to know that virtue is its own reward has been very severe upon this. A man, we are told, ought to live the highest life quite irrespective of whether there is a life beyond or not. It is hardly profitable, however, to discuss the kind of life a man will live quite irrespective of conditions. Life is determined by the kind of motives which enter into it. If a man believes as Paul did in the Risen Christ and in the immortal life beyond death, motives from that sphere of reality will enter into his life here, and give it a new character; and it will be time enough to disparage the morality of this verse when we find the people who dispense with the apostolic motive leading the apostolic life. That man would be of all men most miserable who ran a race for a hope set before him, and found when he had reached the goal that he himself and the hope and all that had inspired him crumbled into dust. It is in

the same temper that the apostle writes immediately afterwards: 'If after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me? If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' This is not a childish petulance, as if he had said, 'I will not be good unless I get to heaven'; it is rather the passionate expression of the feeling that if goodness and all that is identified with it is not finally victorious —in a word, is not eternal—there is no such thing as goodness at all. If life is bounded by time, men will live in one way; if it has an outlook beyond death, they will live in another way, for the range and balance of their motives will be different. Paul is concerned about the Corinthian denial of the resurrection, because it seems to him to spring from a moral preference for the limited view and the narrower range of motives, a preference by which life is inevitably degraded. He does not argue that a man who rejects the resurrection is a bad man, sensual or petty in his morals, but he does assume that the mind of a bad man, whether it be sensual or only small, is weighted against the evidence for the resurrection; and in that he is undoubtedly right. Such a man does not so easily see or sympathize with the meaning of the resurrection; he does not relish what it stands for, and is so far disqualified from doing justice to the evidence on which it rests.

It is not possible to present the various ways in which the evidence for the resurrection is morally qualified without saying or assuming things which to some minds will seem unfair. But this seeming unfairness is not to be imputed to the person who presents the case; it is involved in the necessities of every case in which moral considerations come into play. If a man can easily assume that the Christian consciousness of reconciliation to God, the Christian hope of immortality, the Christian

devotion of the apostolic life, are things which have no proper place in the moral experience of human beings; if it is easy for him to argue that they must be eliminated, reduced or discounted somehow, to bring the mind to moral sanity; if he can seriously think that the New Testament is no more than the wonderful monument of an immense delusion, he will not easily be persuaded to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. Not that he is invited to believe in it on the ground of these moral phenomena, in the appreciation of which men may conceivably differ. But with these phenomena present to his mind, or rather, as we must say of all moral phenomena, to his conscience—with some sense of the character of Jesus, with some perception of the *gospel* of the resurrection, the appeal which God makes through it to sinful man, with some knowledge of what it has produced in human life—he is invited to accept the testimony of witnesses who say, 'We have seen the Lord.' It is the whole of this complex of facts taken together which constitutes the evidence for the resurrection; and the moral qualifications of it, which the writer has tried to explain, may be said at once to impair and to strengthen its appeal. They impair it for those whose estimate of the moral phenomena involved is low; they strengthen it for those whose estimate of these phenomena is high. If there were no such phenomena at all—if the alleged resurrection of Jesus were an insulated somewhat, with neither antecedents nor consequences—no one could believe it; that which has neither relations nor results does not exist. But the mere fact that the phenomena with which the alleged resurrection is bound up are moral phenomena, which will be differently appreciated by different men, makes it impossible to give a demonstration of it as we give a demonstration in mathematics or in natural science. As far as demonstration can be

given in history, it is given by the word of credible and competent witnesses like Peter and Paul. No historian questions that Paul had the experience which he described as seeing the Lord; the open question is, what is the worth of the experience which he so describes? Was it an illusion? was it the accompaniment of an epileptic fit? was it a self-begotten vision of an overheated brain? Or was it a real manifestation of the exalted Lord, with all the significance which Paul discovered in it? There is no value in an offhand answer prescribed by the general view of what is or is not possible in nature or in history. The only answer which has value is that which takes into account, first, the confirmation—if there be such a thing—of the testimony of Paul by that of other witnesses; and second, the other realities of experience which stand in necessary relation to the alleged fact. It is on its estimate of this evidence as a whole that the Christian Church has since the beginning based its faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and the writer cannot feel that any philosophy or criticism has diminished in the least its convincing and persuasive power.

To present the evidence for the resurrection in this way will not surprise those who have thought about the subject. The broad facts on which the certainty of it rests are that it is attested by men who declare that Jesus appeared to them, and that it stands in such relation to other realities as guarantees that it is itself real. Of course this leaves a great many questions unanswered. It does not tell us anything we can realise as to the mode of being in which Jesus appeared: it does not enable us to interpret the appearances scientifically, and to relate the Risen Saviour to the constitution and course of nature with which we are familiar. The original witnesses like Paul never bring Him back into this world, so as to be a part of it as He was before death;

His appearing is the revelation of a transcendent life, and of another world which eludes the resources of physical science. But it is on the broad foundation of the certainty which the resurrection of Jesus had for Paul, and which it has for all who accept the primitive testimony in the large scope given to it above, that we have to investigate such narratives of the appearings of Jesus, and of His intercourse with His disciples, as we find in the synoptic gospels and the book of Acts. Though we should find these full of difficulties which elude all attempts at explanation—nay, though there should turn out to be features in them to which we could not assign any historical value—our faith in the resurrection, firmly established beforehand on its proper basis, would not be disturbed. We should know less than we thought we did about how the resurrection life was manifested, but we should be as sure as ever that the manifestation was made, and that is all in which we are concerned.

The strict sequence of the argument, therefore, does not require us to enter into such details, but they have been so prominent in most discussions of the resurrection that it is worth while to refer to them in passing. The principal difficulties have been found in connexion with three features in the narratives. The first concerns the sequence of the appearances of Jesus; the second, the progressive materialising, or what is alleged to be such, in the representations of the Risen One; and the third, the place of His appearing.

As for the first, it has to be frankly admitted that no one has ever succeeded in constructing a harmony which combines without inconsistency or contradiction all that we read in the Gospels, in Acts, and in 1st Corinthians, on this subject. He who wishes to see the best case that can be stated for the accuracy and credibility of the

New Testament witnesses may find it in the Essay of Dr. Chase[1]; he who wishes to see the strongest case that can be made against them may consult Schmiedel's article in the *Encyclopædia Biblica.*[2] Whether the time over which these appearings extended were longer or shorter—and everything in the New Testament favours the idea that it was comparatively short—it must have been a time of intense excitement for all concerned. The agitation of the actors, their emotions, their amazement, incredulity, fear, joy, are vividly reflected in the stories. If their depositions had been taken on oath immediately afterwards, it is certain that discrepancies in detail would have appeared; but no one who knows what evidence is would maintain that discrepancies of this kind discredit the main fact which is attested. We do not know how soon accounts of the resurrection appearances of Jesus began to be put on record; but, as has been already observed, the gospels as we have them were not written till after the death of Paul, and it was too late then to find out with any precision how this or that appearing preserved in tradition was related in time to the others. The series in 1st Corinthians xv. is no doubt chronological, but it does not profess to be complete, and it leaves us perfectly free to combine other appearances with those it records as best we can. One of the greatest difficulties connected with the temporal aspect of the resurrection is that which rises out of the apparent inconsistency of one and the same writer—the author of the third gospel and of Acts. The first impression left upon the mind by the gospel is that it was on the day of the resurrection itself that Jesus appeared to the two disciples on His way to Emmaus, to Peter, and to the company in Jerusalem; and that on that same day, after

[1] *Cambridge Theological Essays.*
[2] *Resurrection and Ascension Narratives*, vol. iv. 4039 ff.

giving this company His final charge, He led them out to Bethany and there parted from them with blessing (and ascended into heaven). But this, notoriously, is not what we find in Acts. There the parting and the ascension at Bethany do not take place till six weeks after the resurrection. It is not easy to believe that Luke, in writing the sequel to his gospel which he had in view from the beginning, which is indeed only the second chapter of the same work, and which was in all probability produced continuously with it, was conscious of any such inconsistency in his own mind. He did not write for people who knew nothing of his story, but for a circle—for his work was never intended for Theophilus alone—which was acquainted with him and the tradition he represented; and not to insist on the fact that a day of impossible length would be required to take in all the events of the last chapter of the gospel, the probabilities are that its earliest readers, who may never have read it apart from Acts, knew that its closing section was essentially an abridgment or summary, and that whether it was to be interrupted at this point or that—after ver. 43 or after ver. 49—it covered a much longer period than twelve or eighteen hours. There is much to be said for the idea that in the last verses of the gospel Luke condenses into a few lines what he is able in the opening of Acts to expand in some detail, just as in the last verses of Acts he condenses into a sentence two whole years of Paul's preaching in Rome, which he would have expanded in a third book had he been able to bring his history of Christianity down to a provisional termination with the fall of Jerusalem and the death of his two great figures, Peter and Paul. But however this may be, no chronological difficulty impairs in the slightest degree the value of the testimony to the resurrection on which faith has rested from the first. We see how such

difficulties would arise; we see how inevitably they must have arisen; and seeing this we know how to discount them.

Many have felt the second class of difficulties more serious—those arising out of the progressive materialisation of the appearances of Jesus. At first, it is said, He only appears; and the visionary reality of an appearance is not to be disputed. Appearances do appear, however they are to be interpreted. It is a step further when the appearance speaks. Still, speaking is only the counterpart of hearing, and as hearing may be as inward and subjective as seeing, the speaking also may be allowed to pass as a way of representing one aspect of the experience. This, it may be said, is all the length we are carried by Paul. He saw the Lord, and the Lord spoke to him, but there is nothing materialistic in this. He does, indeed, speak of His body, but it is the body of His glory (Phil. 3^{21})—that incorruptible spiritual body into the likeness of which He will change the body of our humiliation; not a body of flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. We might conceive the Risen Saviour saying to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger and see My hands; and reach hither thy hand and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing': we might conceive this in consistency with Paul, for the body of His glory is the body in which He suffered, changed as we shall be changed when this corruptible has put on incorruption. But can we, in consistency with Paul's doctrine of the resurrection body, conceive Jesus saying, 'Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not *flesh and bones* as ye behold Me having'? Can we conceive that He took a piece of broiled fish and ate it before the disciples (Luke 24^{39-43})? It is not wanton to ask such questions: they rise involuntarily in the mind, and we have no choice but to face them. One way of doing so

is to argue that the only reality in the resurrection stories is that of visionary appearances of Jesus, and that everything else in the gospel record is to be explained as the effort of those who believed in these appearances to persuade others to believe in them—the effort to exhibit them as so indubitably and convincingly real that no one would be able to refuse his faith. But reality for the popular mind is that which is demonstrable to the senses; it is material reality; and hence the proof of the resurrection is more and more materialised. The first step in this process of materialisation is the introduction of the empty grave: the real proof of the resurrection, such as it is, had originally nothing to do with the grave; it was the quiet independent fact that Jesus had appeared beyond the grave. To the empty tomb one infallible sign was added after another—conversations, the hands and the side, the flesh and the bones, and at last the crudity of eating and drinking. It is a strong argument against this way of explaining all these phenomena that if this be their genesis, it has left no trace of its motive in the New Testament. The empty tomb comes before us only as a fact, not as an argument. It is never referred to as throwing light either on the character or the reality of the resurrection, though it is assumed, of course, in Matthew 28, that if the Jews had been able to produce the body of Jesus the evidence for the resurrection would have been destroyed. It is not easy to dispute this assumption. The confidence of the disciples in their Master's victory over death could not be without relation to His victory over the grave. They did not believe that He would rise again at the last day, they believed from the very beginning that He had risen again already; and it is merely incredible that with such a faith inspiring them they never so much as thought of the grave, or had not a moment of trouble in reconciling to their belief in

the resurrection of Jesus the demonstration given by the grave, if His body still lay there, that He too saw corruption. The empty grave is not the product of a naïve apologetic spirit, a spirit not content with the evidence for the resurrection contained in the fact that the Lord had appeared to His own and had quickened them unto new victorious life; it is not the first stage in a process which aims unconsciously as much as voluntarily at making the evidence palpable, and independent, as far as may be, of the moral qualifications to which we have already adverted; it is an original, independent and unmotived part of the apostolic testimony. The whole mysteriousness of the resurrection is in it; in combination with the appearances of Jesus, and with all that flowed from them, it brings us to a point at which the resources of science are exhausted, the point at which the transcendent world revealed in the resurrection touches this world, at once enlarging the mind and bringing it to a stand. This mysteriousness attaches to all that we read in the gospels of the appearances of Jesus—His coming and going, His form, as it is called in Mark 16 [12], His showing of His hands and His side; but whether it can be extended in any way to His eating may well seem doubtful. Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, Paul says, and God shall destroy both it and them. Eating is a function which belongs to the reality of this life, but not to that of immortality; and there does seem something which is not only incongruous but repellent in the idea of the Risen Lord eating. It makes Him real by bringing Him back to earth and incorporating Him again in this life, whereas the reality of which His resurrection assures us is not that of this life, but of another life transcending this. The eating is only mentioned by Luke (Gospel, 24 [39 ff.], Acts 1 [4], 10 [41]), and when we consider the fact, which a comparison with the other

gospels renders unquestionable, that Luke everywhere betrays a tendency to materialise the supernatural, it is not too much to suppose that this tendency has left traces on his resurrection narrative, too. But though we have to discount this, the resurrection itself, as the revelation of life in another order, is not touched. It only means that we do not assign to the resurrection life, which has a higher reality of its own, that same kind of reality, with all its material conditions and limitations, with which we are familiar in this world. To reject the eating is not to reject the resurrection life of Jesus, it is to preserve it in its truth as a revelation of life at a new level—life in which eating and drinking are as inappropriate as marrying or giving in marriage.

We now come to the third of the difficulties connected with the gospel narratives of the resurrection, that which concerns the place of Jesus' appearing. If we take the gospels as they stand, and attempt to harmonise them, we may think at first that there are sufficient facilities for doing so. If in Matthew Jesus appears to His disciples only in Galilee, and in Luke only in Jerusalem, in John He appears to them in both; and it may seem reasonable to apply to difficulties about space the same considerations which have already enabled us to discount the difficulties about time. But a closer scrutiny reveals to us that in their representation of the scene of Jesus' appearances the evangelists do not differ from each other merely as men might differ who were recording the testimony of agitated observers. In this case there might no doubt be divergences, but they would be of an accidental character; they would explain themselves, or would need no explanation. What we find in the gospels is far more conscious, deliberate, and serious than this, and there is something perplexing, not to say disconcerting about it, until we understand

the evangelists' point of view. What are the facts, then, under this head, and how are we to look at them?

In the gospel according to Matthew, ch. 26 31 f., we have the remarkable word of Jesus spoken to His disciples as they left the upper room for the garden of Gethsemane. 'All ye shall be offended in Me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee.' This is not the only passage, as we shall afterwards see, in which Jesus predicts His resurrection, but it is the only one in which He connects it with the immediate future of His disciples, and gives what is in a sense the programme of His appearances. There is no reason to suppose that Jesus did not speak these words. It is not always safe to lean on internal evidence, but the truly poetic conception of the Good Shepherd rallying His dispersed flock and going before them (cf. John 10 4) to the old familiar fields is at least in keeping with the occasion and its mood. The evangelist certainly takes the words seriously, and his resurrection narrative carries out the scheme which they suggest. When the women visit the tomb on the first day of the week, an angel says to them: 'Go quickly, and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him' (Matt. 28 7). The same message is repeated by Jesus when He appears to these women on their way to execute the charge of the angel: 'Go tell My brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see Me' (Matt. 28 10). It is not necessary to consider whether verses 9 and 10 are no more than a 'doublet' of what precedes—the tradition of the same fact in another form; the point is that this is the programme which is carried out in the first gospel. The eleven disciples departed into Galilee (v. 16), and

saw Jesus there. There also they received the great commission, Go and make disciples of all nations. Not only is there no appearance of Jesus to the disciples at Jerusalem, but any such appearance is carefully excluded. The disciples are promptly directed away from Jersualem —go quickly and tell them—both by the angel and by Jesus, and we must assume that they left at once. As far as they are concerned the appearing of Jesus is an experience which is connected with Galilee alone.

If we turn to the gospel of Mark, we find there also, at ch. 14 [27], the prophetic words of Jesus quoted above. It can hardly be doubted that for him also, as for Matthew, they determined the character of his resurrection narrative. He reproduces them in his account of what took place at the grave. The angel says to the woman, Go tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, *as He said unto you.* The gospel of Mark, like everything in the New Testament, was written by a believer in the resurrection; and it is inconceivable that it broke off without the fulfilment of this programme. The consternation of the women described in verse 8—'And they went out and fled from the tomb: for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid'—is not the end of the story; and in spite of the ingenious comment of Wellhausen can never have been the end of it. As it stands at present, the gospel according to Mark records no appearance of Jesus whatever; but it is no rash assumption that with the same prophetic intimation as Matthew (Mark 14 [28] = Matt. 26 [32]), and the same or an even more emphatic reproduction of it by the angel at the tomb (Mark 16 [7] = Matt. 28 [7]), the original conclusion ran on the same lines as that of our first gospel. The fear-stricken women may have been met, as in Matthew, and reassured by the

Risen Jesus Himself; and when they did their errand the eleven would start for Galilee and see the Lord there. Indeed, the relation of the two evangelists is such that the only plausible construction of the facts is that the last chapter of Matthew, barring what is said about bribing the soldiers, which corresponds to a passage earlier in Matthew and with no parallel in Mark, is based throughout on Mark's original conclusion. Had this been preserved, it would have answered to Matt. $28^{16\text{-}20}$; that is, it would have given a Galilæan appearance of Jesus to the eleven, and would have excluded an appearance at Jerusalem.

When we turn to Luke, it is of the first importance to remember that he wrote with Mark before him. It is not possible here to give the proof of this; but though there are still scholars who hold that the evangelists had no literary relation to one another, and that each wrote immediately and only from oral tradition, the writer can only express his own conviction of the entire inadequacy of any such view to do justice to the phenomena. Assuming, therefore, that Luke knew Mark, we notice in the first place that he does not give the words of Jesus on leaving the upper room. There is nothing about the smiting of the shepherd, the scattering of the flock, the rising and going before into Galilee. This is not because Luke was ignorant of the words, or accidentally overlooked them, for we can see when we come to his resurrection narrative that the sound of them was in his ears. His two angels say to the women, 'He is not here, but is risen; remember how He spake unto you *while He was yet in Galilee*, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' Here a general reference to Jesus' predictions of His death and resurrection, made while He was yet in Galilee, is substituted for the

direction to the disciples to go into Galilee and meet Him there. We may say 'substituted' without hesitation; for there is nothing accidental about it. Luke had what he thought sufficient reasons for omitting altogether what he read in Mark $14^{27 f.}$; and for giving what he read in Mark 16^{7} an entirely different turn. A reader unfamiliar with the minute comparison of the gospels may think these reckless statements, but no one who has been at pains to examine the way in which Luke habitually makes use of Mark will find any difficulty in them. The only question they raise is, Can we find out the reasons on the strength of which Luke felt entitled or bound to treat these passages as he has done?

The answer is obvious. Luke omitted or modified these passages because they connected the appearances of the Risen Jesus with Galilee, whereas everything he had to tell about Him was connected with Jerusalem. Hence he not only records appearances only at Jerusalem or in its vicinity, but he takes as much pains to confine the disciples to Jerusalem as Matthew takes to get them away. The women do not, as in Matthew, see Jesus on the way from the tomb, but He appears on the very day of the resurrection to Cleophas and his friend, to Peter, and to the eleven and those with them. He bids them, apparently on this occasion, continue in the city until they are clothed in power from on high (24^{49}). They are not only not represented as going to Galilee and seeing Jesus there, according to His commandment: His commandment is reversed; they are forbidden to leave Jerusalem; and it is there, and not amid the scenes of His early fellowship with them, that they receive the great commission. These are the facts: what do they signify, and how are they to be explained?

If we were merely dealing with texts, the relation of which to reality was indeterminable except from them-

selves, we might be hopelessly baffled. We should have to say that both these ways of representing the case could not be true, and that quite possibly neither was. If one witness says, Jesus appeared to His disciples in Galilee only, not in Jerusalem; and another, He appeared to them in Jerusalem only, not in Galilee; the temptation is strong to say that we cannot depend on anything that is said about His appearing. But here it is necessary to remember the evidence for the resurrection which is quite independent of Matthew and Luke. Those manifestations of the Risen Saviour which in themselves and in the spiritual quickening which accompanied them created the Christian Church and the New Testament retain their original certainty even under the extreme supposition that we can make nothing whatever of the testimony of the evangelists. But there is no need even to contemplate a case so extreme. The faith of the evangelists themselves did not rest on the isolated stories they told of the appearing of Jesus, whether in one place or another; it rested where such faith must always rest, on the basis of the apostolic testimony in general, and on the powerful working in the Church of the spirit sent from Christ. The apostolic testimony, however, was much broader and more comprehensive than anything we find in the evangelists, as a glance at 1 Corinthians 15 [4-8] is sufficient to show. Of this, the writer believes, the evangelists themselves were as well aware as we; they could not have been ignorant of a tradition which was common, when Paul wrote, to all Christendom—handed over to him at Jerusalem, and by him transmitted to the Gentile churches. The question suggested by the phenomena of the gospels accordingly takes another form. It is not, How are we to believe in the resurrection in face of the indubitable and intentional inconsistencies of Matthew and Luke?

but, What was the interest which guided an evangelist in what he wrote about the resurrection? What did he conceive to be his duty in this matter, and how were Matthew and Luke led to do their duty in a way which at first sight is so disconcerting to the reader?

In view of the facts which have just been presented, it is not too rash to suggest that in their resurrection narratives the evangelists did not conceive themselves to be stating systematically or exhaustively the evidence for the resurrection. Not that these narratives are not evidence, but, as the writers must have been aware, they are quite inadequate to represent the evidence as a whole. The aim of the various writers—their conception of an evangelist's function—seems rather to have been this: believing in the resurrection themselves, and writing for those who believed in it, they aimed at giving such an account of it as should bring out its permanent significance for the Church. The main thing in all the resurrection narratives in the gospels is the appearing of Jesus to the eleven, and His final charge or commission. This is obviously the case in Matthew, where apart from the appearance to the women in ch. $28^{9f.}$, which is only used to prepare for this, there is no other manifestation of Jesus at all. To the writer, it is not doubtful that in the original form of Mark it would have been the same. Even the later conclusion to Mark, which mentions appearances to Mary of Magdala and to 'two of them as they walked, on their way into the country,' has nothing to tell of these borrowings from Luke and John; in keeping with the true conception of a gospel narrative it enlarges only on the appearance to the eleven, and on what Jesus said to them. Luke, no doubt, in his exquisite story of the two disciples at Emmaus, represents the Lord as interpreting to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, but he too concentrates

attention on an appearance to the eleven and on the great commission given on that occasion. If we leave out of account the supplementary twenty-first chapter, and regard the fourth gospel as closing according to the original intention of the writer with ch. 20[31], we see that there also the same holds good. What John is interested in is to be seen in ch. 20[19-23]. Incidentally an evangelist might mention this or that with regard to an appearing of Jesus to an individual; he might tell expressly that He was seen of Mary Magdalene, as John does; or of more women than one, as Matthew does; he might imply, without expressly telling, or having any details to tell, that He had appeared to Peter, as Luke does; but it was not in these incidents that he was interested, and it is not on the precision of his knowledge as to their time, place, or circumstances, that his belief in the resurrection or his sense of its significance depends. The one main thing is that Jesus appeared to the disciples, the men whom He had chosen to be with Him, and whom He had trained to continue His work; and that in His intercourse with these chosen men their minds were opened to the meaning of the resurrection both for Him and for themselves. His greatness rose upon them as it had never done in the days of His flesh. They became conscious of His exaltation, of His entrance into the sphere of the divine. They saw Him seated at the right hand of God. He had all power given to Him in heaven and on earth, and in the strength of this exaltation He sent them forth to win the world for Him.

It is not in the least improbable—or so, at least, it seems to the writer—that in the great appearing of Jesus to the eleven recorded in all the gospels (Matt. 28[16-20], Mark 16[14-18], Luke 24[36-49], John 20[19-23]) we have not the literal record of what took place on a single occasion, but the condensation into a representative scene of all

that the appearances of Jesus to His disciples meant. These appearances may well have been more numerous —with 1 Cor. 15 in our hands we may say quite freely that they were more numerous—than the evangelists enable us to see; but it is not separate appearances, nor the incidental phenomena connected with them, nor the details of time and place, in which the evangelists and the Church for which they write are interested. It is the significance of the resurrection itself. If for the purpose of bringing out this significance the whole manifestation of Jesus to His disciples was condensed into a single representative or typical scene, and if Jesus nevertheless had in point of fact appeared in different places, we can understand how one evangelist should put this typical scene in Galilee and another in Jerusalem. When we see what is being done we should rather say that both are right than that either is wrong. If the gospel according to Matthew rests on the authority of an original disciple of Jesus, it is very natural that he should make Galilee the scene of the appearing; Galilee, as we have seen, had been prepared for by the word of Jesus, and it would be endeared by old associations. Luke, on the other hand, knew Christianity only as a faith which had its cradle and capital at Jerusalem, and it was as natural that he should put the representative appearing there. In either case, however, it is a representative appearing that is meant, and with whatever relative right it is located in Jerusalem or in Galilee, it is not in the location that the writer's interest lies. It is in the revelation which is made of the exaltation of Jesus and the calling of the Church. This, too, has a representative character, as is evident from the fact that, though the meaning is substantially the same in all the gospels, the language in which it is conveyed is surprisingly different. If we compare the words which Jesus speaks in the four passages

just referred to—all of which unquestionably serve the same purpose in the gospels in which they respectively stand—it is evident that we have no literal report of words of the Lord. We have an expression of the significance of His exaltation for Himself and for the Church. What this significance was we have considered already in speaking of the place of Christ in the faith of the synoptic evangelists; it covered their assurance that He was Lord of all, that He was exalted a Prince and a Saviour, that forgiveness was to be preached to all men in His name; it included the gift of the Holy Spirit and His own spiritual presence. This is what an evangelist is concerned to attest, and if the difficulties which a literal and formal criticism finds in his narrative had been presented to him, the probability is that he would not have taken them seriously. He might cheerfully have admitted that with a perfectly honest mind he had been mistaken about a detail here or there; but that he had been mistaken about the main thing—that the Lord had appeared to His own, and that this great commission was what His appearing signified—he could not possibly admit. Nor need we. The resurrection is not attested in the gospels by outside witnesses who had inquired into it as the Psychical Research Society inquires into ghost stories; it is attested—in the only way in which it can be attested at all—by people who are within the circle of realities to which it belongs, who share in the life it has begotten, and who therefore know that it is, and can tell what it means. To see this is to get the right point of view for dealing with the difficulties in the narratives; it is not too much to add, that it takes away from these difficulties any religious importance. Whether we can tell precisely how they originated or not, the testimony of the apostles and the Church to the resurrection is unimpaired: Jesus lives in His exaltation, and He holds from the beginning in

the faith of His disciples that incomparable place which He can never lose.

The question with which we are ultimately concerned —whether the Christian faith which we see in the New Testament has a basis of fact sufficient to sustain it—is in part answered by what has now been said. The New Testament life would have no sufficient basis, indeed it would never have been manifested in history, but for the resurrection. It is in a sense the fulfilment of the word of Jesus in the fourth gospel: Because I live, ye shall live also; we could never have seen or known it if the creed had ended, as some people think a Christian creed might end, with 'crucified, dead, and buried.' But though without the resurrection the New Testament attitude to Christ would have no justification, and would in point of fact be plainly impossible, the resurrection, taken by itself, is not that complete historical justification of Christianity which our ultimate question had in view. The resurrection is the resurrection of Jesus, and though it lifts Jesus, as it were, into His place of incommunicable greatness, it is this Person and no other who is thus transcendently exalted, and there must be some inner relation between what He is and what He was. There must be some proportion between the life which He now lives at God's right hand, and that which He lived among men upon the earth; there must, if Christian faith is to be vindicated, be some congruity between His present significance for God and man, as faith apprehends it, and that which can be traced in His historical career. It is in the life He lived on earth that His mind is mainly revealed to us; and if His mind, as we there come in contact with it—His mind, in particular, with regard to Himself, and the significance of His being and work in the relations of God and man—did not stand in essential relation to the believing Christian attitude

towards Him, we should feel that Christian faith, historically speaking, had an insecure foundation. The New Testament estimate of Christ can only be vindicated if we can show that the historical Person, whose resurrection is attested by the apostles, explicitly or virtually asserted for Himself, during His life in the world, a place in the relations of God and man as incommunicable and all-determining as that which we have seen bestowed upon Him in the primitive Christian books. The question, therefore, we have now to answer is, What do we know of Jesus? In particular, what place—in His own apprehension—did Jesus fill in the relations of men to God?

II

THE SELF-REVELATION OF JESUS

(*a*) *Preliminary critical considerations.*

In proposing this question for discussion, at least in the second and more definite form, we encounter the same preliminary objections which confronted us in dealing with the resurrection. There are those for whom it is not a question at all, and who therefore will not seriously raise it. To ask what place Jesus filled in the relations of God and men contemplates the possibility of finding that He did fill some place of peculiar interest and importance—the possibility, to put it extremely, that He was and is to both God and man what no other can be, and that all divine and human relations are determined by Him; and this is a possibility which principle does not allow them to contemplate. Jesus was a historical character, they argue; and there cannot be in history a man whose relations to God and his kind

are essentially different from those of other men. A man may be a great spiritual genius, through whom the realities and possibilities of the spiritual life are revealed to others, but no man can be so identified with the truth which he reveals as that if he were lost it would be lost also. Plausible as this may seem, it is an *à priori* settlement of a question which insists on being settled otherwise. The only reason we have for raising the question is that Jesus has, in point of fact, from the very beginning, had a place assigned to Him by Christian faith which is distinct in kind from that assigned to other men; He has been believed to be, both to God and to the human race, what no other is or can be. After what has been said in the earlier part of this discussion, we cannot think this statement of the facts open to question, and we do not feel at liberty to decide *à priori* that the Christian faith from the beginning was a complete mistake. There may have been grounds for giving Jesus His incomparable place. It may not have been an irrational enthusiasm, but the irresistible compulsion of fact in His character, His personality, His attitude and claims, that made His followers exalt Him as they did. No dogmatic preconception as to what is possible or impossible in the field of history can exempt us from the duty of inquiring into the facts. The very men who were the first to have their religious life so absolutely determined by Jesus once thought of Him as only a neighbour, another like themselves. But they came to think of Him very differently, and it is not for the historian to decide peremptorily and off-hand that they were wrong; his function is rather to inquire what it was in Jesus which changed their attitude to Him. Even if he could not find out, he would have no right to say that the change was gratuitous or irrational. He could only say it awaited explanation.

What we have to do, therefore, is to get at the facts

in the most unprejudiced way we can. The difficulties in the way of doing so are not to be ignored, but neither are they to be exaggerated. Exaggerated they undoubtedly are by those who point to the general character of the gospels, and infer from it the impossibility of using them with confidence for any historical purpose. History, as Quintilian says, is written *ad narrandum, non ad probandum*—to tell a story, not to make out a case. But the gospels are written to make out a case. This is avowed by the writer of the fourth; his case is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and he writes that men may believe this, and that believing they may have life in His name (John 20 [31]). It is the case of the others also, and though they do not state it so explicitly, they are none the less under the influence of it while they write. It is not so much that they deliberately misrepresent facts, as that facts are unconsciously transformed in their minds to suit their case. Stories grow, are amplified, heightened, illumined, made demonstrative. Jesus, in the only documents to which we can appeal, is presented in a rôle, that of the Messiah, and in every situation He acts up to the part. All the gospels represent stages in the idealising of their hero, a process which began, no doubt, in the imagination of His enthusiastic disciples even while He lived, but which received an irresistible and incalculable impulse when He rose from the dead. The glory of His exaltation was reflected upon His earthly career; it was manifested in works, words, and experiences answering to the greatness of the Messiah, and of the hopes associated with Him. What, therefore, we are enabled to trace by the help of the gospels, is not so much the history of Jesus as 'the history of the faith of ancient Christendom during the first half century of its existence.'[1] The gospels are not historical sources; they

[1] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, 36.

are documents which reflect 'the faith and the religious imagination of the early churches.'[1] It is more than seventy years now since Strauss in his Life of Jesus gave the first systematic expression to this general mode of appreciating the evangelic narratives, and it has been echoed in writers whose name is Legion down to the present hour. In the precise form which its author gave it, the mythical theory may have been dissipated or reduced to insignificant proportions; but in the mental attitude to the gospel history which is here in view—an attitude which has prevailed widely for two generations, and is at the present moment perhaps more prevalent than ever—we have an extraordinary testimony to its power. As long as this mental attitude prevails we cannot get our question fairly considered. Men's temperaments may vary, and with them the spirit in which they address themselves to the study of the gospels. One man's treatment may be poetic, or possibly sentimental; the gospels for him are the finest flowering of the Christian imagination; of course they cannot be taken for truth, but they must always be delicately and even reverently handled. Another is mocking and unsympathetic; another still dispassionate, not to say unfeeling. But the result is always the same. Jesus remains out of our reach. The figure which we see in the gospels is the Christ of the Church's faith, not a historical person. That figure did not create the Church, it was created by it. As we have them, the gospels are not the foundation of the Christian religion, they are its fruit. They show us the Christian consciousness, not the consciousness of Christ.

Those who thus remind us that the gospels are not historical but religious books—that their motive is not to provide materials for the scientific biographer or historian, but to evoke and to build up faith—might perhaps

[1] *Ibid.*, 47.

ask themselves whether the contrast which is here implied is as real or as complete as they suppose. It is quite true that it is one thing to tell a story, and another to make out a case; but if a man has a sound case, the simplest way to make it out is to tell his story. It is surely conceivable that his case may be constituted by the facts. It is only if he has a bad case that he is under any temptation to misrepresent, or colour, or suppress, or produce facts. The attitude to the gospel narratives which has just been described, and of which Strauss's mythical theory is the most consistent and far-shining example, is prescribed beforehand by the assumption that the evangelists have a bad case. Jesus, it is assumed, cannot really have that place in the relations of God and man which the primitive Church assigned Him, and therefore everything in the gospels which is congruous with that place, which conditions it or is conditioned by it, must have some other explanation than that it is true. But this assumption forecloses the question, and is one which we are not entitled to make. Why should not the evangelists, or the primitive Church for which they wrote, have had a good case? Why must it have been something else than reality which made them give to Jesus the place they did? And if it is conceivable—as surely it is—that the New Testament attitude to Jesus is right, it is as conceivable that the attitude we have been considering to the narratives of His life is wrong. In spite of protestations made in the name of 'scientific' history, the possibilities of history are not to be dogmatically determined beforehand.

If we could have such a thing as Christianity on the basis here exhibited, it would manifestly be Christianity without Jesus. It would be a religion which in some way was connected with Him when it made its entrance into history; but the connexion would be partly undiscoverable, and so far as it was discovered it would be illegiti-

mate. This position is frankly avowed, for example, by Wellhausen. He distinguishes in the broadest manner between Jesus and the gospel—that is, between Jesus and the Christian religion as it has existed from the beginning; and he is not only certain that the attempt to get back to the historical Jesus is one which must always be frustrated, but one which, even if it were successful, could only lead to disappointment. The historical Jesus, could we come face to face with Him, would not sustain the Christian conception of the Christ; He would not provide a justification for the religion which has attached itself to His name. The true policy of the Church, therefore, is to stick to the gospel, and not to try to return to Jesus.[1] Those who retain any connexion with historical Christianity find it hard to comprehend this state of mind. They can draw no such distinction between Jesus and the gospel. They know that if they eliminated Jesus from what they call the gospel they would eliminate everything. Their religion rests on historical realities which are inseparable from the person of Jesus, or it ceases to be. It would not follow, though it ceased to be, that they could have no religion whatever. They might still be believers in God as men were in Old Testament times, but they could not be believers in God 'through Him' (1 Peter 1 [20]). Their religion would have no title to be called Christian, no claim to the character of gospel. It is impossible, therefore, to suppose that the members of any Christian Church can find relief from the stress of intellectual difficulty by distinguishing between the gospel and Jesus. This is not relief, but ruin; it is not the rescuing of their religion, but the abandonment, not to say the renunciation of it. The assumption which underlies it has been frankly stated by a writer already referred to: 'Jesus was nothing more than a human being like

[1] *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, 108 ff.

the rest of us.'[1] Of course if this can be assumed there is no more to be said. The place which Jesus has always held in Christian faith is one which is not open to the rest of us, never has been and never can be; and if He is no more than the rest of us, it should never have been open to Him. Nevertheless, the connexion between Jesus and the Christian religion remains; and unless we are content to leave it entirely in the dark, we shall find ourselves compelled to raise the ulterior question which by this assumption is foreclosed. Granting that the figure in the gospels is the product of the Church's faith, by what was that faith itself produced? The New Testament taken as a whole represents the most astonishing outburst of intellectual and spiritual energy in the history of our race: by what was it evoked? Surely the probabilities are that some extraordinary reality—something quite unlike the rest of us—lies behind and explains all this: a reality so powerful and impressive that it could not easily be lost within the limits of a generation, either by simply falling out of memory, or by being so transfigured and exalted in imagination as to preserve almost no trace of its original aspect or proportions. It is with this prejudice, rather than with the opposite one, that we think it reasonable to approach the investigation of a question which can never be less than vital to those who have been educated in Christian faith.

Before proceeding, however, to examination of the facts, it is desirable to refer to two prevalent but somewhat summary ways in which an attempt has been made to get into contact with the reality which lies beneath the gospel narratives, without entering into any scrutiny in detail.

[1] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, i. 67. The very words ought to be quoted. 'Gerade dass Jesus nichts weiter war als ein Menschenkind wie wir andern auch, &c.' Weiss asserts in the same sentence the greatness and power of the personality of Jesus and his own reverence for it.

The one, while there is nothing in it inconsistent with history, is mainly inspired by a religious interest. When a man who is morally in earnest, absorbed in the effort to lead a spiritual life in the world of nature, a life of freedom in the realm of necessity, takes the gospels into his hand and looks upon the figure of Jesus, the last thing which will occur to him is that this figure is unreal. There may be a great deal in the gospel narratives which puzzles him, which he does not know what to do with, and for the present must ignore; but there is something also which is its own evidence and which rises out of the narrative in unquestionable reality—the spiritual life of Jesus. There is a person before his eyes in the gospel whose spiritual reality (to express it thus) is so indisputable that it carries his historical reality along with it. A life of such perfect trust in God, such wonderful love to God and man —a life that by its very mass attracts to itself so irresistibly all feeble lives that have the faintest affinity with it or capacity for it—a life that gathers into its own deep and powerful stream all souls in search of God and bears them on to the salvation they seek: what could be idler than to speak of such a life as unhistorical or unreal? Those who come to the gospels thus can only feel that the life of Jesus, even in the historical sense, is the most real thing in the world; and so far from admitting that Jesus is practically unknown to us, they are certain that they know Him better than any one who has ever lived, better even than themselves. They are quite willing to leave to historical criticism the investigation of incident and detail; their conviction is not dependent on what is thought of any isolated word or act ascribed to Jesus in the gospels; but the reality, and it must be added the historical reality, of the spiritual life of Jesus is established for them on grounds which historical criticism must acknowledge, and which it cannot set aside.

This is a way of approaching the gospels, and of getting into contact with the reality attested in them, of which we are bound to speak with the utmost respect. It is a truly religious way of approaching them, and must largely reproduce in the soul the experiences of the first disciples of Jesus. But the more completely Jesus, through the picture of His life in the gospels, establishes His ascendency over souls seeking God and freedom, the more inevitably will those questions arise which deal with His place in the relations of the soul and God. How is it that such an ascendency comes to be His? How does it come to be His alone? When we say, 'Yes, this life is real; it is the life of one whom we experience through it and in virtue of it to be Saviour and Lord,' what do we mean? Who *is* He? Is there any indication, in words ascribed to Him, of a consciousness on His own part answering to or agreeing with these experiences of ours? Such questions cannot fail to arise and to press for an answer, and it is in investigating the gospels to find material for the answer, rather than in dwelling upon the general assurance of the reality of the inner life of Jesus, that any contribution is likely to be made to the subject with which we are concerned. It is too easily taken for granted by many who study the genesis of faith in the modern man that he will rest content with the immediate impression made by Jesus in the gospels, and that ulterior questions need not be asked. There are even those who think that it does not matter how the ulterior questions are answered; the impressions are their own evidence and will remain what they are, though the questions they naturally prompt should by some never be raised, and by others pronounced insoluble. But this is not so certain. Capable as the human mind is of inconsistency, it does not readily disown the responsibility of explaining and justifying its convictions. What if Jesus Himself, in the special case

with which we are engaged, pressed this responsibility upon it? What if He directly prompted the ulterior questions? It may turn out to be the case that in His whole bearing toward men and God He assumes one way of answering them to be adequate, and others not; the extraordinary influence which in the pages of the gospels He wields over others may be merely the reflection of an extraordinary consciousness on His part of the place He fills in all the relations of God and human souls. If upon examination this should prove to be so, then, valuable as it is as a starting-point, that conviction of the historical reality of Jesus which confines itself to the self-evidencing reality of His spiritual life—a life assumed to be assimilable, to the last fibre, by us—is not all we have to take into account. While it assures us that Jesus was truly a historical person, and a historical person who was a great conductor of spiritual force, it does not face with sufficient definiteness the question whether there was in this historical person, not that which makes a spiritual movement of some kind credible, but that which justifies the particular spiritual movement which appeals to Him as its Author. When we speak of the spiritual or inner life of Jesus—an expression which we instinctively interpret by those experiences in ourselves which we should describe by the same name—there is an involuntary tendency to obliterate or ignore any difference which may exist between Jesus and those to whom His spiritual life appeals. Without consciously thinking of it, we regard Him for the time as if He were only what the rest of us are. But this amounts to deciding, also without thinking, the greatest question which the gospels and the Christian religion raise. The self-consciousness of Jesus is not a happy expression, but it is preferable to the inner life of Jesus in one way: it safeguards more effectively the objectivity and personal peculiarity of

that which it denotes. It leaves room for the possibility that in the mind of Jesus about Himself there may be not only the consciousness that He is one with us, but such a consciousness as justifies the transcendent place apart given to Him in the faith of the Church. Hence it is the mind of Christ about Himself—His self-consciousness in the technical sense—and not His inner life or spiritual experiences in general, which must be our principal subject of inquiry; and to investigate this subject satisfactorily we must go beyond the vague impressions in which the life of Jesus first proves its reality to us, and study the gospel evidence in detail.

The second of the two summary ways of getting into contact with the reality in the gospels is the polar opposite of the one just discussed. It is that which is illustrated in the well-known article of Schmiedel in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. 'When a profane historian,' says Schmiedel, 'finds before him a historical document which testifies to the worship of a hero unknown to other sources, he attaches first and foremost importance to those features which cannot be deduced merely from the fact of this worship, and he does so on the simple and sufficient ground that they would not be found in this source unless the author had met with them as fixed data of tradition. The same fundamental principle may safely be applied in the case of the gospels, for they also are all of them written by worshippers of Jesus.'[1] We only put this more simply when we say that anything in the gospels may be regarded as signally true if it is inconsistent with the worship of Jesus. If we could not find such things at all, Schmiedel holds 'it would be impossible to prove to a sceptic that any historical value whatever was to be assigned to the gospels; he would be in a position to declare the picture of Jesus contained in them to be purely

[1] *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 1872 ff.

a work of phantasy, and could remove the person of Jesus from the field of history.' If we accepted this canon of criticism, it might be reassuring to us as historians to find that there are passages in the gospels which no worshipper of Jesus could have invented, passages, consequently, which were data to the evangelists, and which we are safe in counting historical. Of these the article referred to mentions five, which along with four others, all the latter being connected with the miracles and employed to discredit them, 'might be called the foundation pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus.' The five passages in question are worth repeating. They are —(1) Mark 10[17]: Why callest thou Me good? None is good save God only. (2) Mark 3[21]: He is beside Himself. (3) Matt. 12[32]: Whoso speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him. (4) Mark 13[32]: Of that day and of that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son but the Father. And (5) Mark 15[34]: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? It is a curious comment on the things most surely believed among profane historians, that of these foundation pillars the third and fifth have since been found by some decidedly shaky. This, however, does not matter to us at present. What does matter is that Jesus is only admitted to be real in a sense which, avowedly, leaves the whole phenomenon of New Testament religion not only unjustified but inexplicable. We have no testimony to Jesus at all, as Schmiedel points out, except that of men who worshipped Him; but though some of that testimony, as will be afterwards shown, comes from intimates and contemporaries, the only part of it which we can receive as true is that which is inconsistent with such worship. The idea that there should be reality in Jesus of such a kind as to justify worship is summarily excluded *ab initio:* its exclusion, indeed, is

the first principle of this criticism. It is one way of criticising this to point out that it takes for granted that the worship of Jesus is wrong, that the Christian attitude to Him is unjustifiable, and that the Christian religion was from the beginning a mistake; it is another, and not a less relevant one, to point out that it leaves the Christian religion, in the only form in which it is known to history, without any historical explanation. It is impossible to rest seriously in such a situation, and it is as impossible to suppose seriously that we have got out of it when Schmiedel tells us that 'the thoroughly disinterested historian, recognising it to be his duty to investigate the grounds for this so great reverence for Himself which Jesus was able to call forth, will then first and foremost find himself led to recognise as true the two great facts that Jesus had compassion for the multitudes and that he preached with power, not as the scribes.' The importance of these two great facts is not to be disputed, but few will find in them the whole explanation of the New Testament attitude to Jesus. There must be a more intelligible proportion than we can discover here between the cause and the effect; and while it may relieve some anxious minds to know that the most rigorous scepticism is obliged to admit the existence of Jesus, inquirers with an eye on all the facts to be explained may find that a more searching investigation brings them into contact with a still greater reality in Jesus than this paradoxically sceptical criticism has discovered. We cannot admit beforehand, nor can we allow others to assume, that there is a complete breach of continuity between the Jesus who can be discovered in history and the Christ who has had from the first the transcendent place, with which we are familiar, in Christian faith; whether there is or is not a true continuity between them, such a continuity that the historical Jesus justifies the attitude of believers to their Lord and

Saviour, is a question which has to be tested by examination of the evidence in our hands. That evidence is contained in the gospels, and it is to an examination of these documents we now proceed.

For reasons on which it is needless to enlarge, our attention will be confined to the synoptic gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It is so difficult in the gospel according to John to distinguish between the mind of the writer and that of the subject—between the seed of the word and that to which it grows in the soul—between what John heard in Galilee or the upper room and what the Lord by the Spirit said in His heart in later days—that it could only be used inconclusively in the present discussion. Even the first three gospels cannot be used without reflection; and though this is not the place to make any contribution, were one capable of it, to the solution of the synoptic problem, it is necessary to indicate the position from which one writes, and to justify it so far as the case requires.

The criticism of the gospels, literary and historical, has now gone on for more than a hundred and fifty years, and, much as remains and perhaps must ever remain uncertain, there are one or two important conclusions on which experts are agreed. To begin with, it is agreed that the gospels of Matthew and Luke are based upon Mark.

With a very few slight omissions, the whole of Mark is embodied in the other evangelists. He has provided for them the framework of their narrative, and it is indeed the strongest proof of his priority that while Matthew and Luke frequently diverge from each other in respect to the order of events in the life of Jesus, they never agree against Mark in such divergences. In other words, where divergence in the order of incidents occurs, either Matthew supports Mark against Luke, or Luke sup-

ports him against Matthew: a clear proof that his is the original order underlying both, and that no authority common to both can be pleaded against it.

The priority of Mark to the other gospels being established, it becomes a question of importance who Mark was, and what was his relation to the events which, as far as we know, first obtained from his hand that literary representation through which we are familiar with them. Mark, the author of the gospel, was assumed till yesterday to be identical with the John Mark of the book of Acts (12 [12]) and the Mark mentioned by Peter (1st Epist. 5 [13]) and Paul (Col. 4 [10], Philemon [24], 2 Tim. 4 [11]), and in spite of recent suspicions [1] there is no solid ground for questioning this view. A very ancient tradition, quoted by Eusebius from Papias, who was bishop of Hierapolis before the middle of the second century, is all the external help we have to define more precisely the relation of Mark to the facts with which he deals. It runs as follows:[2] 'And the Elder said this also: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered, without, however, recording in order what was either said or done by Christ. For neither did he hear the Lord, nor did he follow Him; but afterwards, as I said, [attended] Peter, who adapted his instructions to the needs [of his hearers], but had no design of giving a connected account of the Lord's oracles. So then Mark made no mistake, while he thus wrote down some things as he remembered them; for he made it his one care not to omit anything that he had heard, or to set down any false statement therein. Such then is the account given by Papias concerning Mark.' This brief statement has been put upon the rack a thou-

[1] See J. Weiss, *Das älteste Evangelium*, 385 ff.

[2] See Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39. The translation is taken from Professor Gwatkin's *Selections from Early Christian Writers*, p. 43 ff.

sand times, though to an unsuspicious mind it seems fairly unambiguous. The presbyter, to whom Papias refers as his authority, had been himself an immediate disciple of Jesus, and Papias was personally acquainted with him.[1] It is hardly conceivable that he should have mistaken what this early disciple used to say (ἔλεγεν) about the gospel; although he is disparaged by Eusebius, for theological reasons, as a person of very mean intelligence, Papias was quite capable of recording a fact. What is required in a witness is not largeness of mind, but fidelity. The one important fact in the testimony of the presbyter who had kept company with Jesus is this, that the gospel according to Mark is the work of a man who was the companion and interpreter of Peter. Indirectly, if not immediately, it has the authority of an apostle behind it.[2]

[1] Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39, 7. 'And Papias, of whom we are now speaking, confesses that he received the words of the apostles from those that followed them, but says that he was himself a hearer of Aristion and the presbyter John.' The much-discussed question whether this John whom Papias had heard is or is not one with John the son of Zebedee, the apostle to whom the fourth gospel is ascribed, is not of vital consequence here; he was in any case a 'disciple of the Lord,' which cannot mean simply a Christian, but only one who had been in contact with Jesus. Papias does not give John's opinion from a book; but in his own book, quoted by Eusebius, he reports the account the presbyter used to give about the gospel of Mark. For opposite views about John and his importance here v. Zahn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neut. Kanons*, vi. 109 ff.; Harnack, *Chronologie der altchr. Litteratur*, 660 ff. Harnack's attempt to minimise the significance of the phrase 'the disciples of the Lord,' applied to Aristion and John, is rather ingenious than convincing. When he remarks that μαθηταί was *ganz wesentlich auf Palästina* (*für die Gesammtheit*) *beschränkt*, he seems to overlook the fact that in Acts it is freely used of Christians everywhere, and that outside of Acts and the gospels it does not occur in the New Testament at all.

[2] Harnack, *Chronologie*, i. 686 f., after quoting the passage from Clem. Alex. preserved in Eusebius, *H. E.*, vi. 14, and ending with the words (referring to Mark's composition of the gospel at the request of Peter's hearers in Rome) ὅπερ ἐπιγνόντα τὸν Πέτρον προτρεπτικῶς μήτε κωλῦσαι μήτε προτρέψασθαι,, adds: 'Das heisst doch mit dürren Worten: Dieses Evangelium hat keine petrinische Autorität; Petrus ist für dasselbe nicht verantwortlich; es steht lediglich auf sich selber.' This is only true because it is ambiguous. The book did not bear Peter's *imprimatur;* he issued no certificate with it to secure it a legitimate place in the Church. But though it was sent out on its own merits it had Peter's preaching

If we turn from this tradition to the gospel itself we find significant features in the narrative by which it is confirmed. Detail begins in Mark with the hour at which Peter and Andrew are called and enter into more or less constant attendance upon Jesus (ch. 1 [16 ff.]). The one full Sabbath day which is narrated in the gospel centres round Simon's house (1 [29 ff.]). When the next morning early Jesus, who had retired into a desert place to pray, was 'hunted down,' it was by 'Simon and they that were with him'; we can imagine how Peter in telling the story simply said 'we.' When Jesus appoints the Twelve, we are told how He gave Simon the surname Peter, though no explanation of the new name is given. At a later stage—at what, indeed, it was once customary to regard as the crisis and the turning-point in the career of Jesus—it is Peter who confesses Jesus to be the Christ; and in close connexion with the first prediction of the Passion, which is the immediate sequel, it is Peter who remonstrates with Jesus, and draws down upon himself a severe rebuke (8 [29 ff.]). It is Peter again who, when the rich ruler refuses to sell all that he has, as a preliminary to following Jesus, reminds the Master that He and His companions have done what had proved too hard for this promising recruit, and tacitly at least inquires what reward they shall have. In the closing scenes of the gospel he is still more conspicuous. He is one of the little party to whom the prophetic discourse of Jesus is addressed on the Mount of Olives (13 [3 ff.]); we are told in vivid terms how he boasted of his devotion to Jesus, how he was reproached in the garden that he could not watch with his Master one hour, how in spite

behind it; and the writer's qualification, according to the very passage on which Harnack bases these strong assertions, was his long and familiar acquaintance with this preaching (*ὡσὰν ἀκολουθήσαντα αὐτῷ πόρρωθεν καὶ μεμνημένον τῶν λεχθέντων*). It is in this sense it is said to have, and does have, Peter's authority.

of repeated warnings he denied Him with oaths and curses; we are told also of his swift and deep repentance ($14^{27\,ff.}$). Finally (in ch. 16^{7}) there is the message of the angels to the women at the tomb: Go tell His disciples *and Peter* that He goeth before you into Galilee—a message which, as has been already observed, justifies the inference that this gospel originally closed with an appearance of Jesus to the eleven, but either added to that or combined with it an appearing, to some special intent, to Peter. It is quite true that all these things about Peter might have been known and told by some other than himself. When, however, we notice the peculiar character of the events which make up the first exciting day; when we consider that incidents in the life of Jesus are depicted only from the calling of Peter onward; when we review, especially, the circumstantial and vivid narrative of the closing chapters in which the apostle plays so mournful a part, it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than that the tradition preserved by Papias is confirmed. That tradition is not of the nature of a learned deduction; it is given as a piece of information by one who was in a position to know what he was speaking about, but it is supported by an examination of the gospel itself. It is quite safe to assume, then, that in some real sense the preaching of Peter underlies the gospel of Mark. The date at which the gospel was composed cannot be precisely determined, but there is a growing preponderance of opinion which puts it in the sixties of the Christian era, before, though not long before, the destruction of Jerusalem.[1]

This early date and apostolic connexion are not to be underrated. We cannot indeed presume upon them so

[1] Harnack puts it, as a probability, between 65 and 70: *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, i. 718; J. Weiss between 64 and 66: *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, i. 61.

far as to say that we have the testimony of an eye-witness for everything recorded in Mark, but they have, undoubtedly, historical importance. They prove that in the life and experience of one man at least there was no radical inconsistency, no breach of continuity, between an actual acquaintance with Jesus as He lived on earth and the Christian attitude to Jesus as the object of faith. The idea of much modern criticism of the gospels is that 'Jesus' can be pleaded against 'the Christ,' 'history' invoked to discredit 'faith'; but the primary fact which we have to go upon is that the very man who stood closest to the historical Jesus appealed to the historical knowledge of Him to vindicate and evoke faith. It is quite possible that at one point or another there may be secondary elements in the representation of Jesus by Mark. It is quite possible that at one point or another the Christian teaching with which the evangelist was familiar may have left traces on his language which are suggestive rather of the period at which he wrote than of that concerning which he writes. Instances of either must be judged upon their merits. When we consider, however, that the gospel of Mark was composed within thirty or forty years of the death of Jesus, that the subject with which it deals had been the matter of incessant and public teaching throughout this period, and that the narrative rests, as we have seen, at its beginning, its crisis, and its close, upon the authority of an immediate and intimate disciple, we shall probably be disposed to infer that the presumptions are strongly in favour of its historical character. Certainly we shall not feel at liberty to pronounce anything unhistorical merely because it helps to make Christianity intelligible, or to evince the continuity between the historical life of Jesus and the life of the Christian Church.

There are cruder and subtler ways in which this has

already been done. A scholar who admits the evidence which connects the second gospel with the preaching of Peter proceeds to distinguish in the narrative what can and what cannot claim to be covered by this apostolic testimony. His criterion is the very simple one that everything supernatural—perhaps one should say everything too supernatural—must be excluded. As such things cannot possibly have taken place, they cannot possibly rest on the word of an eye-witness. This short and easy method of dealing with certain elements in the gospel story is applied with cheerful confidence, for example, by Von Soden.[1] It was more plausible to argue thus when the gospels were dated in the second century, and legends had had time and space to grow; it is not so easy to believe that the faith of Christians—for it is always faith which is the parent of the marvellous—could deform or transfigure the story of Jesus in the lifetime of those who were familiar with Him, under their very eyes, while they were engaged in bearing their own testimony to Him, and had, so far as we have any means of judging, a lively sense of the importance of its historical truth (Acts 1 [21 f.], 1 John 1 [1]). But it is not necessary to enter into this subject here, for what is ruled out by Von Soden as too supernatural has hardly an immediate bearing on the question in which we are interested. Far more important in its issues, and far subtler in itself, is the criticism of Wellhausen. There is a section in the book—that which extends from chap. 8 [27] to chap. 10 [45]—which, to put his opinion bluntly, is Christian, and therefore not historical. The framework of time and space is the same as in the earlier chapters, but there is a deep inward distinction. 'Here,' as it is put by Wellhausen, whose language is reproduced in what follows,[2] 'begins the

[1] *Die wichtigsten Fragen im Leben Jesu*, 29 ff.

[2] *Das Evangelium Marci*, 65 f. *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, 81, f., 113.

gospel in the proper sense of the term, the gospel as the apostles preached it; till now there has been little trace of it. The resolve to go to Jerusalem, which does not seem to be occasioned by the Passover, produces a surprising change. A transfigured Jesus stands before us, and the two healing miracles which are still interspersed are positively incongruous. Jesus no longer teaches universal truth, He prophesies regarding His own person. He no longer addresses the people, but a limited circle of His disciples. He discloses to them His nature and His destiny. He does this, too, in a purely esoteric fashion; they must not tell any one till after His prophecy regarding Himself has been fulfilled; nay, until then they do not understand it themselves. The occasion of renouncing His former reserve with them was provided by Peter's confession, Thou art the Messiah. He Himself evoked and accepted this confession, yet in the same instant He corrected it: He is not the Messiah who is to restore the Kingdom of Israel, but quite another. It is not to set up the Kingdom that He goes to Jerusalem, but to be crucified. Through suffering and death He enters into the Messianic glory, and only in this way can others enter. The Kingdom of God is no Jewish Kingdom, it is destined only for certain elect individuals, the disciples. The idea that μετάνοια, repentance, is still possible for the nation is completely abandoned. Instead of a call to repent, addressed to all, comes the summons to follow, which can only be fulfilled by a few. The conception of following now loses its literal meaning and assumes a higher one. What is involved is no longer as hitherto attendance on Jesus in His lifetime, going with Him where He goes; the main thing is to follow Him to death. As *imitatio Jesu*, following is possible even after He dies, or rather it first becomes possible then in the strict sense. The Cross is to be borne after Him. The

disciples must for the Kingdom's sake break completely with national and domestic ties; they must sacrifice everything that binds them to life, and even life itself. Reform is impossible: the hostility of the world can never be overcome. The breach with the world is demanded which leads to martyrdom. The situation and the mood of the primitive Church are here reflected beforehand by Jesus as He goes to meet His fate. On this depends the profound pathos in which the introduction to the story of the Passion surpasses the latter itself.'

The facts which are here summarised have long been familiar: what is open to question is the explanation and the historical estimate of them. According to Wellhausen, this section of Mark, which contains or presupposes the Christian gospel, is for that very reason not historical at all. It is not conceived in the mind or in the historical situation of Jesus: what is reflected in it is the position and mood of the primitive martyr Church. Jesus, as Wellhausen puts it elsewhere, here transports Himself not merely into His own future, but into the future of His Church, whose foundation was His death and resurrection: and this, it is assumed, we cannot suppose Him to have done. On this we should remark, in the first place, that there is something essentially false in the contrast assumed to exist between the mind and historical situation of Jesus, and the position and mood of the primitive martyr Church. Jesus was Himself a martyr, and the situation in which He found Himself, in the last weeks and months of His life, was to all intents and purposes that in which the primitive Church found itself after His death. That the disciples did not understand what He taught them about His death is no doubt true, but we cannot infer from this that it is a mistake on the part of the evangelist to represent Him, in the circumstances of that time, as teaching anything about His

death at all. The disciples' difficulty in understanding had nothing to do with the historical situation. Quite apart from that situation and its circumstances, the idea that the destined Christ should die a violent death at the hands of men was so disconcerting as to be incredible to the Twelve. It required the event and its sequel—the Resurrection—to open and reconcile their minds to it. For Jews in general it remained as incredible and unintelligible in the days of the martyr Church as it had been for His followers while Jesus was yet with them. It does not follow, because words ascribed to Jesus have an application for disciples after His death, that these words were invented then and only put into His lips by anticipation.[1] Jesus could anticipate. Indeed we may say that like every one who thinks of leaving the world and of leaving behind in it those who are dear to him, He could not but anticipate. He transported Himself instinctively into the future and addressed Himself to it. When we come to examine the texts in detail, we shall see whether or how far there is anything in them which may be pronounced impossible in His historical situation.

Further, it must be observed that the critical change in the teaching of Jesus, which sets in at ch. 8^{27}, has much to support it. It is not inconceivable, but inherently credible and likely, that such a change should have come with the crisis in the ministry of Jesus with which Mark connects it—a crisis in which the antagonism of His own people had driven Him beyond their borders, and led Him to concentrate His efforts on the training of the Twelve. That there is such a crisis intended in the narrative the writer must still believe, in spite of recent attempts to disintegrate the gospel and deprive the sequences in it of all significance. It takes a great deal of courage to question the historicity of the first

[1] See an admirable page in Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, 143.

scenes in this 'Christian' section—that in which Peter confesses Jesus to be the Christ, an incident enshrined in every form of the evangelic tradition; and that in which Jesus rebukes Peter as the Satan for protesting against the idea that the Christ should suffer. But if these scenes are admittedly historical, it is hard to see on what ground anything that comes after is questioned. Nothing that comes after is more unequivocally 'Christian.' To believe in Jesus as the Messiah who through death enters into glory—to believe in Him and to follow Him on the path of suffering and martyrdom—this is indeed Christian; but it is a conception of Christianity which there is no need whatever to remove from the life of the historical Jesus. The mere fact that it was intelligible, relevant, applicable, after He died and rose again, does not prove that it was not as intelligible, relevant, and applicable, while He lived.

It must be added that there is a question-begging exaggeration in Wellhausen's list of the 'so to speak technical ideas and words' which are characteristic of this section, and set it in relief against the gospel as a whole: 'the Son of Man, the gospel, the name of Jesus, this world and the world to come, the Kingdom of God, the δόξα, life, salvation, following in the higher sense, ministry, the μικροὶ πιστεύοντες, the σκάνδαλα.'[1] Several of these, as a glance at the Concordance will show, occur earlier in the gospel; most of them can be paralleled from an evangelic document which is independent of Mark;[2] and not one of them is technical except in the sense in which any word becomes technical when it is applied in new conditions. But the conditions in which these words are applied in the gospels, as will become evident when we examine them in detail—or such of

[1] *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, 81.

[2] See Harnack's list of the substantives in Q, *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 108 ff.

them as throw light on our problem—are conditions in which they may quite well have been applied by Jesus Himself; on any other hypothesis, indeed, the mind and the language of Christianity present insoluble difficulties. It is no doubt the case that in this section of Mark it is conspicuously impossible to see in Jesus *nur ein Menschenkind, wie wir andern auch*, but it is impossible to accept this personal prejudice as a principle of criticism. Wellhausen only puts it in a new form when with a view to discrediting this 'Christian' part of the gospel he tells us that Jesus was not a Christian but a Jew, and not a Jew who taught a new faith, but only a new and better way of doing the will of God, which for him as for all his countrymen was revealed in the Old Testament. No doubt He was a Jew, but He was a Jew to whom the Christian religion in some way owes its origin; and it is not a *prima facie* reason for scepticism when we find in the record of His life hints or suggestions of what was unquestionably its outcome. To apply this to the disciple whose authority, we have seen reason to believe, lies behind the narrative: if there was, as there must have been, a continuity of some sort between Peter's experiences with Jesus in His lifetime and his relation to Him after death—if the Christian attitude to the Lord is not to appear as something entirely irrational and groundless, but as something with true antecedents in the relation of His followers to Jesus—the presumption is that the 'Christian' section of Mark is as historical as the rest. But possibly the one consideration which influences criticism here most decisively is the attitude of the critic himself to the resurrection. If Jesus did not rise from the dead at all, it relieves Him from the reproach of self-delusion if we assume that He did not anticipate or predict His rising, as in these chapters He repeatedly does. But if He did rise again on the third

day—if His future really included that unparalleled experience—it is by no means inconceivable that a person with a destiny so extraordinary should have contemplated and spoken of it. If the certainties with which we start are that Jesus was only a human being, exactly like the rest of us, and that He had no resurrection on the third day, but only came to life again in the hearts of His followers, then Mark 8^{27} to 10^{45} must seem radically untrue. But so must a great deal more in the life of Jesus—so must everything, in short, which connects that life with Christian faith. But these certainties are assumed, not proved, and we can approach with unprejudiced minds this as all the other parts of the gospel. It is not doing anything but justice to the whole of the facts involved if we say that we ought to have a bias in favour of what connects Christianity with Jesus, rather than in favour of ideas which fix a great gulf between them.

The priority of Mark to Matthew and Luke, its relation to Peter, and its date in the sixties, are the first important conclusion of gospel criticism. There is a second which is perhaps even of higher interest. A comparison of Matthew and Luke shows not only that each of them has embodied practically the whole of Mark, but that each of them has also in common with the other a large quantity of matter which is not found in Mark. This matter consists in the main of words of Jesus, and it is pretty generally agreed that besides Mark, which supplied them with the narrative outline which they follow, Matthew and Luke used a second source which supplied them with reports of Jesus' teaching. Many attempts have been made to reconstruct this document, but naturally with precarious results.[1] It is easy to take the first step, and to refer to it all the matter which is

[1] For the two latest, v. Harnack's *Sprüche und Reden Jesu;* B. Weiss, *Die Quellen der synoptischen Ueberlieferung.*

common to Matthew and Luke, but wanting to Mark. But this does not take us far. It is quite possible that one of the evangelists may have made extracts from it which the other ignored. For example, it contained an account of the ministry of the Baptist from which both certainly borrowed. But what of the differences between Matthew and Luke at this point? Matthew alone tells us of a reluctance on John's part to baptize Jesus (Matt. $3^{14\,f.}$): was this found in the source common to him and Luke, but passed over by the latter? Luke alone gives a report of John's teaching to the multitudes, to publicans, and to soldiers (3^{10-14}): was this found in the common source, and similarly passed over by Matthew? We cannot tell. The document which both our evangelists use may have been more comprehensive than they enable us to see. If we notice the way in which they make use of Mark, a document which we have in our hands, we may even infer that it was possible for them to omit what we should regard as very characteristic or interesting things. For instance, neither takes over from Mark the fact that Jesus called the sons of Zebedee sons of thunder; neither mentions the irreverent exclamation of His friends, He is beside himself; neither reproduces the beautiful parable of the seed growing spontaneously, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; neither records the singular miracles of $7^{31\,ff.}$, $8^{22\,ff.}$. The story of the widow's mites, which is borrowed by Luke but not by Matthew, shows us how one could take what the other left, and though the natural inclination (we might think) would be to take everything good for which there was room, it is obviously possible that there may have been things overlooked by both. The one question of great interest here is whether this lost document contained an account of the Passion of Jesus. Scholars are divided. B. Weiss, who has given unusual at-

tention to the subject, thinks it did not; and he has been followed by the majority, including Harnack. Professor Burkitt, on the other hand, inclines to believe it did. While admitting that not a single phrase in the last three chapters of Matthew can be supposed to come from this lost source, he points out that some of the peculiar matter in the twenty-second chapter of Luke is actually given in earlier chapters of Matthew: in other words, there is found in Luke, chapter 22, matter which comes from this lost source. But if it be the case, as it really seems to be, that Luke gives his extracts from this source καθεξῆς —in the order in which he found them—it is clear that the source did tell things about the Passion, and so was in some sense a gospel as truly as Mark.[1]

The question, though interesting, is not vital. It is of less consequence to know the exact compass of the document than to be acquainted with its date and authorship. Until quite recently it was held by all who admitted its existence to be older than Mark. Opinions differed as to whether he had or had not made use of it in his work, but its antiquity was unchallenged. The opinion, too, was widely spread that it was of apostolic authorship. It was connected, perhaps ingeniously, perhaps also soundly, with another of the traditions of the Elder John preserved by Papias. We have already quoted what this elder, an immediate disciple of Jesus, says about Mark. 'But concerning Matthew,' Eusebius proceeds in his quotation from Papias, 'the following statement is made [by him]: so then Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as he could.'[2] The expression

[1] Weiss, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, § 45; *Die Quellen der synoptischen Ueberlieferung*, 1–96; Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, 88–102; Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, 133; *Journal of Theological Studies* (Review of Harnack), viii. 454.

[2] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39. The translation is again from Professor Gwatkin.

'composed the oracles' is probably identical in meaning with 'wrote his gospel'; but the term 'oracles' suggests that the main interest of the work in question is to be found in the words of divine authority which it contains. The description would suit quite well such a document as the vanished source used in common by our first and third evangelists; and as our first gospel, in the form in which we have it, is certainly not a translation from Hebrew (or Aramaic), but a writing based chiefly on two sources, Mark and the one we are now discussing, which lay before the compiler (as they lay before Luke) in Greek, it was open to any one to propound the hypothesis that the words of Papias referred not to our first gospel but to the Aramaic original of the source common to it and Luke—a source which would thus be of immediate apostolic authorship, the work of Matthew the publican. The first gospel owes its characteristic peculiarity to the fact that it amasses the oracles of the Lord and presents them so as to minister to the needs of the Church; and as preserving in a suitable historical framework the substance of the publican apostle's work, it might reasonably, though not with strict accuracy, be called the gospel according to Matthew. This combination of the data gains in plausibility when we consider that the lost source under consideration originally existed in an Aramaic form;[1] and although, in the nature of the case, it does not admit of demonstration, it has in the judgment of the writer a far higher degree of probability than any other hypothesis with which he is acquainted.

It would, of course, be thoroughly discredited if we could accept the conclusion of Wellhausen, who from internal evidence infers that the lost source of Matthew and Luke was somewhat inferior to Mark in age, and altogether inferior to it in authority. His most im-

[1] See Wellhausen's notes on Luke 6^{23}, 11^{41}.

portant argument is the general one that the process of 'Christianising' the material, which in Mark is practically limited to the section chapter 8^{27}–10^{45}, has in this document been carried through from beginning to end. Jesus everywhere speaks to His disciples as Christians, and that in a predominantly esoteric fashion. It is not only when He has His Passion in view that He reveals Himself to them as the Messiah who is destined to pass through death to glory; on the contrary, He comes forward as Messiah from the first; His preaching throughout is directed to this end—to found His Church, and in doing so to lay the foundation of the Kingdom of God upon earth.[1] What has been already said of Wellhausen's estimate of the 'Christian' section of Mark can be applied here also: even if we find in the source with which we are concerned features which prove that there was no solution of continuity between the life of Jesus and the life of the Church, we shall not for that reason hold that such features are necessarily unhistorical. We shall not feel obliged to argue that the Church has carried back its faith and experience into the life of Jesus, and is putting its own mind into the lips of its Master. Even if it were the case—which we do not believe—that the lost document was more recent than Mark, it would be a stupendous and groundless assumption that Mark meant to tell us all that was really known of the words and deeds of Jesus; and that everything in Matthew or Luke which goes beyond him was either unknown to him or regarded by him as of no value. The contents of the source which Matthew and Luke used in common besides Mark did not come into existence in a moment. They were not produced out of nothing by the author who wrote them down. It is as certain as anything can be in history that in substance

[1] Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, 84.

they were being taught in Christian churches at the very same time and under the very same conditions in which the contents of Mark's gospel were being taught. Luke did not write to the excellent Theophilus to tell him what he had never heard before, but that he might know the certainty about the things in which he had been instructed. Even if we cannot identify the author of this second source, nor fix the very year in which he wrote, we can be confident that it is for all practical purposes contemporary with Mark and equal with it in authority. Both have behind them the authority of the teaching, and of the teachers, who dominated the Church in the 'sixties.

Nor is this authority prejudiced when we admit, as far as we need to admit, that the word of Jesus fructified in men's minds, and that there may be cases in which it is impossible to draw the line between the very words which Jesus uttered and the thoughts to which these words gave birth in the minds to which they were addressed. Wellhausen argues that the spirit of Jesus lived on in the Church, and that the Church not only produced the gospel of which Jesus is the object, but also gave a further development to His ethics. This development took place, no doubt, on the foundation he had laid; and that in which His spirit expressed itself seemed to have intrinsically the same value as what He Himself would have said in similar case. It is not with the idea here that we have any quarrel, but with the inconsiderate application of it. There is no reason to doubt that many of the words of Jesus were preserved mainly by being preached, and that they were liable in this way to a certain, or rather an uncertain, amount of modification with a view to bringing out the point of them in one or another set of circumstances. Every minister in preaching from a text sometimes expands the text in the person, so to speak, of him who uttered it; and if the original

speaker was Jesus, he puts words into Jesus' mouth freely in doing so. In this sense Wellhausen is right in saying that it is the discourses in the gospels, and not the narratives, that are most liable to 'development' in the course of time; contrary to the older criticism which held that while legendary stories grew with a rank and marvellous fertility, the discourses of Jesus were comparatively trustworthy. But the modern preacher who 'develops' a word of Jesus in the person of the Speaker knows what he is doing; and it is only natural to assume that the primitive preacher or catechist knew also. He did not mean that the words he used were literally Jesus' words; they were the word of the Lord as he understood it. This, however, is quite a different thing from the wholesale ascription to Jesus in a historical book—and when all is said and done the gospels are meant to be read as narratives of fact—of a great mass of discourses which have no immediate connexion with Him. The result of Wellhausen's criticism, applied as he applies it, is, as Jülicher has said,[1] that the most profound, simple and moving elements in the gospels are set down, simply because our literary evidence for them is supposed to be later than Mark, as of no historical value. The primitive Church is made to appear richer, greater and freer than its Head. For this, however, analogies are completely wanting; if the gospels as we have them are the fruits of faith, and not a historical testimony to Jesus, they are such fruits as have no example elsewhere. How did it come to pass that these fruits so suddenly ceased to appear on the tree of faith? How did its fertility come to an end? And when Christian faith was yielding such gracious fruits apparently without conscious effort, when it uttered itself spontaneously in the parables of the Kingdom or the Sermon on the Mount, how are we

[1] *Theologische Litteraturzeitung*, 1905, col. 615.

to explain the fact that neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer—and surely they all had faith—could ever produce a page which even remotely reminded us of the manner of the Lord? Their whole attitude to the realities with which they deal—to God and man and truth —is other than His, and even when they speak in the power of His spirit it is not in His style and tone. After all, the words of Jesus have a seal of their own, and are not so easily counterfeited. It is true, as Wellhausen says, that truth attests only itself, not its author; but when the various self-attesting truths coalesce into the unity of the Speaker and His life—when, as Deissmann says, they are seen to be not separate pearls threaded on one string, but flashes of one and the same diamond—the truth and its author are not separable. The sum of self-attesting truths which finds its vital unity in Jesus guarantees His historical reality in a character corresponding to these truths themselves, and the more we come under the impression of this character, the less disposed shall we be either to prescribe its measure beforehand, or to assume that vital and conscious relations between it and the Christianity in which it somehow issued are necessarily unhistorical. That Jesus left no written record of Himself is true. It is true also that what He wished to leave behind Him in the world was not a protocol of His words and deeds, a documentary attestation of them such as historians or lawyers might require; what He craved was a spiritual remembrance, a living witness in the souls of men born again by His words of eternal life.. But the very men on whom He made the impression which made them Christians, the very men who hung on His lips because His words were what they were, would not easily lose all sense of distinction between His words and thoughts and their own. The very power and wonder of the words would preserve their singularity, and, as has already been re-

marked, the conspicuous fact in the New Testament is not the imperceptible way in which the words of Jesus merge into those of Christians, but the incomparable and solitary relief in which they stand out by themselves. The possibility of modification, of deflection, of 'Christianising' even, in applying these words in any given situation, is one which need not be questioned beforehand; the mind is subject to its own laws, and the spirit has its own liberties, even in dealing with the words of Jesus. But the broad contrast which has just been pointed out remains, and it justifies us, not only in examining each instance on its merits, but in approaching the examination with a presumption in favour of the witnesses rather than against them. When we appeal to the discourses of Jesus in Matthew and Luke for testimony to the mind of Jesus regarding Himself or His work, this is the presumption which will determine our attitude.

For the purpose which we have in view it is not necessary to refer further to the critical analysis of the gospels. We shall confine ourselves to the gospel of Mark, and to that second source, common to Matthew and Luke which in accordance with custom will be cited as Q. The limits of Q, as soon as we go beyond the matter which is guaranteed as belonging to it by its occurrence both in Matthew and Luke, are quite uncertain; and therefore we shall confine our investigation to the passages which have this guarantee.[1] It is impossible to lay down before-

[1] This is the course followed by Harnack in his own investigation of Q—*Sprüche u. Reden Jesu;* and in his review of Weiss's recent works, *Die Quellen des Lukasevangeliums* and *Die Quellen der synoptischen Ueberlieferung* (in *Theol. Litteraturzeitung*, 1908: 460 ff.), though he admits that Weiss gives an essentially correct description of the characteristics of Q, he can lay no stress on those passages in Weiss's reconstruction of it which depend upon one witness only. Weiss is practically certain of these, and of his restoration of them (*Aufstellung der Matthäusquelle*); to Harnack they are only possibilities. The general impression left on the mind of the writer by the study of all these works is that far greater allow-

hand the precise line which the investigation must follow. In the opening sections of the gospel—those which narrate the baptism and the temptation of Jesus—we have both sources to appeal to; when we pass this point it will be convenient to consider first the testimony of Q, and then that of Mark, to the self-consciousness of Jesus. In pursuing this course, the method adopted must be left to justify itself by the result. Though no stress can be laid on the chronology of the gospels, there is an order in them of some kind, and as far as possible that will be followed.

(*b*) *Detailed study of the earliest sources as illustrating the self-consciousness of Jesus.*

The Baptism of Jesus

(Mark 1 [9-11]; Matt. 3 [13-17]; Luke 3 [21 f.])

Both in Mark and in Q Jesus is introduced to us in connexion with John the Baptist. He comes upon the stage of history when He presents Himself to John on the banks of the Jordan to be baptized. The synoptic gospels recognise John as the forerunner of Jesus, but they do not record any testimony of John to Jesus as the Christ. John, probably in the sense of his own weakness,

ance must be made than is made in any of them for the influence upon the evangelists of other than documentary evidence in the writing of the gospels. Assuming that Luke knew a gospel narrative—say the healing of the paralytic or the parable of the sower—both from Mark and Q, we must remember that as a person living in the Christian Church it is a thousand to one that he knew it by having heard it told independently of either. Even if he tells it in the main on the basis of Mark or of Q, we are not bound to explain his divergences from either by conscious motives discoverable by us; to the writer, in spite of Weiss's claim and of Harnack's assent to it (*ut supra*, 465), it is as certain as anything can be that thousands of the divergences for which ingenious explanations are given are purely accidental, and have no motive or meaning whatever. In other words, 'oral tradition' is a *vera causa* operating far more extensively than the criticism of Weiss is disposed to admit.

and of his inadequacy to the task of regenerating Israel, spoke of the Coming One as mightier than himself, and as able to baptize with Holy Spirit and fire; but he did not expressly identify Him with Jesus. Yet when we consider the extraordinarily high estimate which Jesus had of John, and reflect that of all His contemporaries John alone seems to have made any spiritual impression on Him, these lofty anticipations of the Coming One may not seem quite irrelevant to Jesus' consciousness of Himself. It is probably true to say that He felt Himself, when He entered on His work, called and qualified to fulfil John's anticipations—the holder of a mightier power than the last of the prophets, and able in virtue of it to succeed where he had failed.

But be this as it may, we come to a point of critical importance with the baptism of Jesus Himself. It was narrated in Q, as we can infer with certainty from the Temptation story, which both Matthew and Luke have taken from this source, and which in all its elements refers to the Baptism and to the voice which then declared Jesus Son of God. It is not Q's narrative of the Baptism, however, which has been preserved by our evangelists; at this point, with slight modifications, both Matthew and Luke follow Mark. The record, marvellous as it is, is of the simplest. 'And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water He saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him: and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased' (Mark 1^{9-11}). The fact that the baptism of Jesus came at a later period to present difficulties to the Christian mind—difficulties which may be reflected in Matt. $3^{14\,f.}$, to which there is no parallel in Mark or Luke—is at least an argument

that it actually took place.[1] We can hardly, indeed, imagine a period at which there would not be difficulty in the idea that a person who was himself the object of religious faith—and this, as we have shown above, was always the character of Jesus in the Church—should submit to be baptized with a baptism of repentance which looked to remission of sins (Mark 1 [4]). The faith which was embarrassed by the baptism, but found the fact in the gospel tradition, would never have given it that decisive significance in the career of Jesus which it has in all our documents unless it had been able to appeal in doing so to the authority of Jesus Himself. It would rather have slurred it over or ignored it, as some suppose the author of the fourth gospel has done, or it would have represented it as taking place on account of others, not of Jesus Himself. In our fundamental source, however, the second gospel, the whole story is told as affecting Jesus alone. It is He, not John the Baptist, who sees the heavens rent and the dove descending; and it is to Him, not to John or the by-standers, that the heavenly voice is addressed, Thou art My beloved Son. It is no strained inference, but the natural impression made by this ancient narrative, that His baptism was the occasion of extraordinary spiritual experiences to Jesus, experiences which no doubt had something transcendent and incommunicable in them,

[1] Weiss inserts Matt. 3 [14 f.] in his restoration of Q, and argues that in this, which for him is the oldest source of all, a vision of the Baptist only was recorded: it was John who saw the heavens open and the spirit descend; John to whom the heavenly voice was addressed (This is My Son, Matt. 3 [17]; not Thou art my Son, Mark 1 [11]). He gives literary explanations of how the variations which appear in our gospels arose; to the writer they are quite unconvincing. The evangelists must have heard the story a thousand times, quite apart from the version of it which was under their eyes as they wrote: and it is an unreal and impossible task to explain their divergences as due to literary exigencies connected with the adjustment of a text which has itself to be hypothetically reconstructed. *Die Quellen der synoptischen Ueberlieferung*, 2 f.

but of which He gave His disciples such an idea as they could grasp in the narrative preserved by the evangelists.

The significant features in this narrative are the descent of the Spirit and the heavenly voice. We do not explain these when we speak of Jesus as being for the time in an ecstasy or rapture, we rather indicate the inexplicable element in them. The descent of the Spirit signifies that from this time forward Jesus was conscious of a divine power in His life; the Spirit, whatever else is involved in it, always includes the idea of power, and power in which God is active. This consciousness of Jesus was attested by the future course of His life. When He appeared again among men, it was in the power of the Spirit, and mighty works were wrought by His hands. It is a mark of their historicity that the canonical gospels have none of those puerile miracles of the infancy by which the apocryphal gospels are disgraced; it is not till the man Jesus, in the maturity of His manhood, has been anointed with the Holy Spirit and power, that He begins to act in the character of the Anointed. But from this time He does begin, and the consciousness of divine power which must have attended Him from the outset of His ministry is, in however indefinite a form, the consciousness of having a place apart in the fulfilment of God's purposes, of being, in a word, the one mightier than himself for whom the Baptist looked.

Nothing could be more gratuitous than to argue that the whole story of the Baptism of Jesus is here transformed by Christian faith. The fact of the baptism is supposed, on this view, to be puzzling in itself, and the difficulty inherent in it is got over by assimilating it to the Christian sacrament in which water and the Spirit are so far from being opposed to each other (as they are by John) that they normally coincide. It is literally preposterous to assume that Christian baptism set the

type for that of Jesus, it is the baptism of Jesus which sets the type for the sacramentum of the Church. When Loisy[1] asserts that it is probable that tradition as first knew nothing but the simple fact of the baptism, and that the idea of the Messianic consecration created the narrative which we find in Mark, it is perhaps enough to reply that we do not see the probability. If Jesus was conscious, from this time on, of a divine power which took possession of His life and in which He entered on a new career for God, there is no reason why the narrative should not have come from His lips as it stands, and if He had no such consciousness—if the baptism was not in some sense a spiritual birthday for Him—we may as well say at once that we know nothing whatever about Him. Taking His anointing with spirit and power, on which the whole life depicted in the gospels is dependent, as in the broadest sense which spirit and power can bear, indisputable fact, we must admit that Jesus stands before us from the very beginning of our knowledge of Him as a Person uniquely endowed, and probably therefore with a consciousness of Himself and of His vocation as unique as His spiritual power.

This, indeed, is what is suggested by the words of the heavenly voice. It has often been remarked that this voice which, though we must call it objective, is yet a spiritual and not a physical phenomenon, utters itself in words of the Old Testament. The first clause, 'Thou art my Son,' comes from the second Psalm, where it is addressed by God to the ideal King of Israel. The second clause, 'the beloved, in whom I am well pleased,' goes back in the same way to Isaiah xii, and recalls the servant of the Lord on whom God puts His Spirit that in meekness and constancy He may bring forth judgment to the nations. It is impossible to suppose that this com-

[1] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. [illegible]

bination is accidental, and it is quite unnecessary to suppose that it is the work of the apostolic Church looking back on the way in which Old Testament ideals were united in the life of Jesus. The ideals of the Old Testament were far more vivid to Jesus than they were to the apostolic Church, and we fail to do justice to Jesus unless we recognise this. Further, they were much more than ideals to Him; they were promises of God which came to have the virtue of a call or vocation for Himself. Often He had steeped His thoughts in them, but at last, in this high hour of visitation by the living God, they spoke to Him with direct, identifying, appropriating power. It was His own figure, His own calling and destiny, that rose before Him in the ideal King of the Psalmist, and the lowly Servant of the Prophet; it was His inmost conviction and assurance from this hour that both ideals were to be fulfilled in Himself. The voice of God addressed Him in both characters at once.

We do not need to define either ideal more closely, and just as little the combination of the two, to see the importance of this. If the ideal King of the Psalmist and the lowly Servant of Isaiah are united in Jesus, then all the promises and purposes of God are consummated in Him as they can be in no other. This, from the first—that is, from the moment at which we are introduced to Him—is how He conceives Himself. It is in this conception of Himself and because of it that He enters on the work which the gospels describe. It is this consciousness of Himself which is the vindication of His whole attitude to men, and of the attitude of His followers to Him. It is no objection to the truth of this conception that Jesus did not begin His ministry by announcing it. To appeal to the nearest analogy, unworthy though it be, who tells all that he hopes or aspires to at thirty? Yet a time may come for telling, and

when it does come it may be apparent even in an ordinary life that unavowed convictions had inspired it all along, and that in these convictions lay the key to everything in it that was powerful or characteristic. Others only saw afterwards, but He whose life was involved could say from the beginning, *Secretum meum mihi*—I know myself and what I have to do.

In particular, it is not enlightening here to employ such technical expressions as the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, or to argue that the expression 'My Son,' as used by the heavenly voice, bears an 'official' Messianic meaning. The ideal King of the Psalm stands alone: he is a unique figure, with a unique calling in relation to the Kingdom of God. But though this is the hour at which in a flash of divine certainty His own identity with that ideal figure takes vivid possession of the mind of Jesus—or might we not rather say, because this is such an hour—the whole associations of a word like 'official' are out of place. What we are dealing with is not official, but personal and vital. The gospels do not afford us the means of tracing the antecedent preparation for this supreme experience of Jesus, either on the psychological or the ethical side; but it cannot have been unprepared. It was not to any person at random, it was to this Person and no other, that the transcendent calling came; and it must be related in some way to what Jesus was before. Now the one thing which is stamped upon the New Testament everywhere, as the outstanding characteristic of Jesus, is His filial consciousness in relation to God. This was what no sensitive spiritual observer could miss. It was so dominant and omnipresent in Him that it constrained Christians to conceive of God specifically as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is difficult, therefore, to suppose that Jesus could ever hear the words, This is My Son, or could ever repeat

them in teaching, without charging and suffusing them with this filial consciousness. The calling of the ideal King, who is spoken of by God as My Son, is not to be contrasted with this as official with personal; rather must we suppose that on the basis of this personal relation to the Father the consciousness of that high calling became suddenly and overwhelmingly real to Jesus. The consciousness, it might be put, of the Fatherhood of God, as something realised in Him as it was in no other, is the spiritual basis of all conceptions of His place, vocation, and destiny, and therefore it is not to be opposed to these last nor excluded from them. This is the line also on which our minds are led by the one scene preserved from our Lord's earliest manhood in Luke $2^{40\,ff.}$ On the banks of the Jordan as in the courts of the Temple Jesus was about His Father's business. His consciousness of Himself, as determined by the heavenly voice, was solitary, incomparable, incommunicable; but it was the consciousness of one who before it and in it and through it called God Father; it was not official, but personal and ethical, filial and spiritual throughout.

It is only another way of saying this if we remark that a quite unreal importance is often supposed to belong to the asking and answering of such questions as When did Jesus first claim to be the Messiah? When did the consciousness that He was Messiah awake in His own mind? What modifications, if any, did He introduce into the meaning of the term? All such questions exaggerate the official as opposed to the personal in the life of Jesus, and in doing so they undoubtedly mislead. Jesus was greater than any name, and we must interpret the names He uses through the Person and His experiences and powers, and not the Person through a formal definition of the names. However such titles as Messiah

(or Son of God as a synonym of Messiah) may take shape as the investigation goes on, *what we have to start from is the experience of an endowment with divine power, and of a heavenly calling to fulfil the grandest ideals of the Old Testament. This consciousness of divine power and of a unique vocation, it is no exaggeration to say, lies behind everything in the gospels.* The words and deeds of Jesus, the authority He wields, the demands He makes, His attitude to men, assume it at every point. Whatever may have been the order of His teaching, whatever the importance in His historical career of the hour at which the disciples saw into His secret and hailed Him as the Messiah, there is something of far greater consequence —the fact, namely, that the life of Jesus, wherever we come into contact with it, is the life of the Person who is revealed to us in the Baptism. It is not the life of the carpenter of Nazareth, or of a Galilæan peasant, or of a simple child of God like the pious people in the first two chapters of Luke. It is the life of one who has been baptized with divine power, and who is conscious that He has been called by God with a calling which if it is His at all must be His alone. It is this which makes the whole gospel picture of Jesus intelligible, and which justifies the New Testament attitude toward Jesus Himself. The attitude is justified only if the picture is substantially true; and it is not an argument against the narrative of the baptism, but an argument in favour of it, that it agrees with the whole presentation of Jesus in the gospels, and with the Christian recognition of His supreme place. It agrees with them in the large sense that the subject of the gospel narrative is from beginning to end a person clothed in divine power and conscious that through His sovereignty and service the Kingdom of God is to come.

The Temptations

(Mark 1 12 f., Matt. 4 1-11, Luke 4 1-13)

That conception of the consciousness of Jesus with which He is introduced to us in the story of His baptism is confirmed and elucidated by the narrative of the temptation. This was found in the source common to Matthew and Luke, and is given in a more summary form in Mark. It is impossible to say how Mark comes to tell no more than he does, or why Matthew and Luke have so much fuller an account than he. The question is often discussed as if the two versions supplied by our gospels were all that had to be considered—as if Mark must have abridged the source common to Matthew and Luke, or as if that source must have expanded Mark. Surely there is every probability that the subject of these narratives was one which would have a familiar place in oral tradition, and might be known in this way in a more condensed or an ampler form. Why should not Jesus—to whom, unless it is pure fiction, the narrative must go back—have spoken of the strange experiences which succeeded His baptism, now with less and again with greater fulness of detail? At one time he might say no more than we find in Mark—that the hour of exaltation, in which He saw heaven opened, and had access of divine power, and heard the voice of God call Him with that supreme calling, was followed by weeks of severe spiritual conflict. He was in the wilderness, undergoing temptation by Satan; He was with the wild beasts, in dreadful solitude; yet He was sustained by heavenly help: the angels ministered to Him. At another time He might use the poetic and symbolic forms which we find in Matthew and Luke, and which were no doubt found in their common source, to give some idea of the nature and issues of this spiritual conflict. This not only

seems to the writer inherently credible, but far more probable than that the imagination of the Church, working on the general idea that Jesus must have had a spiritual conflict at the hour at which He entered on the Messianic career, constructed out of His subsequent experience this representation of what it knew His conflicts to be. No doubt the temptations by which Jesus is here assailed are those by which He was assailed throughout His life, but that is only to say that they are real, not imaginary. A serious spirit with a high calling faces the world seriously, and with true and profound insight. It looks out on to it as it is. It sees the paths which are actually open to it there, along which it may go if it will, and which often seem to offer a seductively short path to its goal. In face of the testimony of the gospels that Jesus did this, it is simply gratuitous to eliminate the temptation from His history, and to explain it by parallels from the mythical history of Buddha, or as the reflection of the Church upon Jesus, not the self-revelation of Jesus to the Church. The historical character of the narrative is supported by what most will admit to be an allusion to it in an undoubted word of Jesus: 'No one can enter into the house of the strong man and spoil his goods unless he first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house' (Mark 3^{27}, Matt. 12^{29}, Luke $11^{21f.}$). In the wilderness Jesus bound the strong man. He faced and vanquished the enemy of His calling, and of all the work and will of God for man. He contemplated the false and alluring paths which promised to bear Him swiftly to the fulfilment of His vocation, and in the strength of His relation to God He turned at once and finally from them all.

A closer look at the Temptations throws an important light on Jesus' consciousness of Himself. They are all relative to the character in which He is presented at the Baptism, that of the Son of God, the ideal King in and

through whom God's sovereignty is to be established. Jesus *is* this ideal King, and the question agitated in the Temptations is how His Kingship is to be realised, how in and through Him the sovereignty of God is to become an accomplished fact in the world. Conscious of His calling, conscious of the divine power which has come upon Him, He looks out upon the world, and upon the ways in which ascendency over men may be won there. The first temptation is concerned with the most obvious. Build the Kingdom, it suggests, on bread. Make it the first point in your programme to abolish hunger. Multiply loaves and fishes all the time. This, as we know from what followed the feeding of the five thousand, when the multitudes wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him their King, was a way to ascendency which lay invitingly open. Men would have thronged around Him had He chosen it, and the temptation to do so lay in the fact that He had the deepest sympathy with all human distress. It was because He had compassion on the multitudes who were ready to faint in the wilderness that He spread a table for them. But he knew that the Kingdom of God could not come by giving bodily comfort a primacy in human nature. He said to Himself in the wilderness, as He said afterwards to others, Seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life. The second temptation was one which dogged Jesus through His whole career. Jews demand signs, says Paul; and a ready way to ascendency over them was to indulge in marvellous displays of power. This is what is meant by the temptation of the pinnacle. 'Cast thyself down,' means, 'Dazzle men's senses, and you will obtain the sovereignty over their souls.' This was what men themselves asserted. 'Show us a sign

from heaven.' 'What sign showest Thou then that we may see and believe?' 'Let Him now come down from the cross.' It is not easy for us to understand a temptation which was dependent on the possession of superhuman power, but the important point to notice is that Jesus rejected appeals to the senses as a means to attain ascendency over men for God. He never attempted to dazzle. He made no use of apparatus of any description. An elaborate ritual of worship, awing and subduing the senses, would have seemed to Him, as a means of producing spiritual impressions and winning men for God, a temptation of the devil. He aimed at spiritual ends by spiritual means, and regarded anything else as a betrayal of His cause. And finally, as He looked upon the world in which the Kingdom of God was to come, He saw another kingdom established there already and in possession of enormous power. 'It has been handed over to Me, and to whomsoever I will I give it.' This saying, which in Luke is put into the lips of Satan, is not meant to be regarded as untrue. There would be no temptation in it if it was untrue. It is the terrible fact, which confronts every one who is interested in the Kingdom of God, that evil in the world is enormously strong. It wields vast resources. It has enormous bribes to offer. For almost any purpose it seems able to put one into an advantageous position. At times it seems as though unless one is willing to compromise with it, to recognise that it has at least a relative or temporary right to exist, it will be impossible to get a foothold in the world at all. Now this was the third temptation. Jesus would feel it the more keenly because His was truly a kingly nature, born to ascendency, exercising it unconsciously, and now called to realise the ideal and promise of God's King. It was urgent that the power which was His of right should actually come into His hands, and He would feel keenly

how easy the first steps would become if He could only make some kind of limited and temporary accommodation with evil. If He could get or take its help in any way it would do so much to clear His path. But He was conscious also that for the ideal King, through whom the reign of God was to be realised, this was impossible. He saw that to negotiate with evil was really to worship Satan, and that no advantage was worth the price. He said to Himself in this temptation what He afterwards said to all, What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose himself?

The interest of the Temptations, in connexion with our subject, lies in this: *they show how the Kingdom of God is in the mind of Jesus essentially bound up with Himself.* Jesus is often represented now as teaching us things about the Kingdom of God, and then assuming an attitude of pure passivity, simply waiting on God to bring the Kingdom which no action of man, whether His own or another's, can hasten or hinder; but we see here that to His own mind the coming of the Kingdom is involved in His victory over these temptations. His initial triumph, in principle, over all the assaults of Satan—His resolute turning away, from the very beginning, from every false path—the entrance into the world and into the life of man of a Person thus victorious—are a revelation of what the Kingdom is, and a guarantee that at whatever cost it will prevail. This, it will not be questioned, is how Christian faith conceives Jesus all through the New Testament; but it is of supreme importance to notice that it is how Jesus conceives Himself from the opening of His career. His relation to the Kingdom of God is in no sense accidental. It is in His attitude to the possibilities of earth that its true nature is revealed, and with Him it stands or falls. And what was said of the baptism may be repeated here: it is in this character

and in no other that Jesus stands behind every page of the gospel history. It is only this character which makes that history intelligible; and to try to undermine the narrative, only because we do not share the New Testament attitude to Jesus, is as unwarranted historically as it is on all other grounds gratuitous.

The Self-Revelation of Jesus in His Ministry

It has been remarked already that no stress can be laid on the chronology of the gospels, but if it is difficult to arrange the matter in order of time, it is fatal to attempt to systematise it. Of all books on the New Testament, those which deal with the teaching and with the mind of Jesus are the least interesting, because they lapse as a rule into this false path. Nothing in the gospels is systematic. There is no set of ideas which recurs, as in John; no succession of questions emerges to be answered by the application of the same principles, as in Paul. Everything is in a manner casual: everything is individual, personal, relative in some way to the moment and its circumstances, though it may enshrine eternal truth. We may say of Jesus, with even less qualification, what has been said of Luther, that He always spoke *ad hoc* and often at the same time *ad hominem*. When words so spoken are reduced to a system the virtue has gone out of them; they no longer leave with us an impression of the speaker. But an impression of the Speaker is precisely what the words of Jesus do leave, and what we are in quest of; and consequently, at the risk of being tedious, it will be necessary to trace the self-revelation of Jesus as it is made from one situation to another, in one relation or another, by one significant utterance or another, in the pages of the gospels. Speaking generally, the order followed will be that in which the various passages of Mark and Q occur in Huck's *Synopse*, and

it must be remembered that it is not on any single passage, but on the cumulative effect of the whole, that the argument depends.

The summary account which Mark gives of the Galilæan ministry (ch. 1 [14f.]) is no doubt to be taken as a summary: we cannot assume that on any given occasion Jesus used these very words. But there is no reason to doubt that they are a true summary, and truly represent the mind and the message of Jesus. With His appearance 'the time was fulfilled': the great crisis had come in God's dealings with men. It is probably a mistake to say that the apocalyptic idea of a predestined course of events underlies this: the apocalyptic way of calculating times and seasons was foreign to the temper of Jesus, and He repeatedly disclaims it (Matt. 24 [36]; Acts 1 [7]). But if anything can be depended upon in the gospels, it is that He had the sense of living in a crisis of final importance: history up to this point had been, so to speak, preparatory and preliminary, but now the decisive hour had come. It was a gracious hour, and the announcement of what was impending was 'the gospel of God'; but it was an hour in which the true decision was a matter of life and death, and we shall see as we proceed how that decision turned upon a relation to Jesus Himself. The evangelist strikes the true key to the consciousness and the self-revelation of Jesus, when he speaks of the fulness of the time and represents Him as saying, The Kingdom of God has drawn near; repent and believe in the gospel.

Jesus and the Twelve: The Conditions of Discipleship

(Mark 3 [13-19]; Matt. 10, and parallels in Luke)

The first incident recorded by Mark is the calling of two pairs of brothers, Simon and Andrew, James and

John, to a closer relation of discipleship. This is guaranteed by the inimitable word, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. This was His own task, to win and gather men for the Kingdom, and they were to help Him. The ascendency which He exercised in thus drawing men away from their worldly callings and hopes into association with Himself is quite indefinite, and even in yielding to it the four first disciples could have no distinct idea of what it involved. But they did yield. They left their nets and followed Him, and as they lived in His company, heard His words, saw His character and His works, the sense deepened in their hearts of His right to command. It is not, however, until the circle is enlarged by the appointment of the Twelve, and by Jesus' commission and instructions to them, that a vivid light is cast for us on Jesus' consciousness of Himself. Wellhausen has recently attacked the whole narrative of Mark at this point.[1] The giving of bynames, like Cephas and Boanerges, he argues, is not a historical act; in short, we have no historical act at all in Mark 3^{13-19}; it is rather a set of statistics, presented as history—an index, in the form of a scene upon a lofty stage. Similarly, of Mark 6^{7-13}, which narrates the sending out of the Twelve in pairs, he says that it contains no historical tradition. The passage has great value as showing us the way in which the earliest Christian mission was carried on in Palestine, but it is of no value for the life of Jesus. Both Mark 3^{13-19} and Mark 6^{7-13} are editorial sections in the gospel; they reveal something of the author but nothing of the subject.

It is not easy to take this seriously. The Twelve are not to be eliminated from the history of Jesus by any such flimsy devices. There is far earlier evidence for their peculiar standing in the Church than that of Mark.

[1] *Das Evangelium Marci*, 24 ff., 45 f.

In 1 Cor. 15 [5] Paul mentions an appearing of Jesus to the Twelve. This is part of the tradition of the Jerusalem Church about the Risen Saviour which Paul learned when he returned to Jerusalem from Damascus within a few years of the resurrection. The Twelve had not arisen spontaneously and assumed the importance which Paul's language implies. They are mentioned frequently in Mark, quite apart from their formal appointment and mission (4 [10], 9 [35], 10 [32], 11 [11], 14 [10, 17, 20, 43]), and they were known to the other early source used by Matthew and Luke (Matt. 19 [28], Luke 22 [30]). Presumably not even Wellhausen intends to deny that Jesus surnamed Simon Cephas, and that He called the sons of Zebedee 'our sons of thunder.' This last particular, which is preserved by Mark alone (3 [17]), is usually and properly regarded as a proof of close connexion between the writer and the apostolic circle. But if Jesus gave these names, what is gained by saying that the giving of by-names is not an historical act? The evangelist probably does not mean us to understand that Jesus gave them as part of the formal act by which He 'made' the Twelve; but as He writes out the list of the Twelve, it comes quite naturally to Him to mention these surnames of promise or rebuke. They may have been first bestowed on other occasions—Cephas, for example, at Matt. 16 [18], Boanerges perhaps at Luke 9 [54 f.]; but to appeal to them to discredit the appointment of the Twelve is beside the mark. There is as little ground for Wellhausen's attack on their mission. He does not believe it to be historical, because though the experiment is successful it is not repeated, and the Twelve are for the future as passive and as wanting in independence as before. We have no such knowledge of the circumstances as enables us to say that this experiment if successful must have been repeated. The fact that a thing is not done twice

is not a proof that it was not done once. When the Twelve returned from their experimental mission, a crisis was at hand in the ministry of Jesus; and from that time He kept them closely by Him, and devoted Himself almost exclusively to preparing them for the dark future which was now impending.

The calling of the Twelve, then, being indisputably historical, what is its significance? It has no doubt a reference of some kind to Israel, the people of God. It hardly matters, for our purpose, whether we think that Jesus had in view the ancient Israel, and expected the Kingdom of God to be realised under its ancient organisation; or whether when He spoke of the Twelve sitting on thrones and judging (that is, ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel, He was quite consciously using imaginative or poetic language, and had in view a new people of God in which the ideal of the old should be fulfilled. In either case, when He chose the Twelve, the new Israel of God was before His mind as something to be constituted round them, and as something, at the same time, in which His own place would be supreme. He saw in His mind's eye, as they gathered about Him, what John saw in the apocalypse—the wall of the city having twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Separated from everything else that is known of Jesus—separated, for example, from what we are told of His baptism, and from what we shall see in more articulate form later—this may seem fanaticism if ascribed to Jesus Himself, and extravagance in an interpreter of the gospels; but taken in its actual historical relations, as the gospels supply them, the writer regards it as simple truth. But what a revelation of the mind of Jesus it gives! He does not call Himself Messiah, or Son of God, or any other lofty name; but He acts, unassumingly so far as the out-

ward form goes, yet in a way which indicates His conviction that the fulfilment of all God's purposes—for nothing less is involved in the re-constitution of God's people—is to come through Him.

When Jesus sent out the Twelve on the preliminary or experimental mission to which reference has been made, He gave them a charge or commission. This is summarised in Mark 6 [7-11], but what corresponds to it in Matthew fills the whole of a long chapter (ch. 10). There can be no doubt that this chapter, like the Sermon on the Mount, is a composition of the evangelist; he has gathered into it for catechetical or other practical reasons all the words of Jesus to His disciples which have any bearing on their work as missionaries. Some of these words are relevant to the historical occasion on which Matthew represents them as spoken; others are only relevant if the outlook of the speaker is conceived to be not on the Jewish world immediately around him, the Galilæan cities and villages where he was usually so welcome, but on the Jewish world as it was after His death, that Judæan environment which in its representatives was so hostile to the disciples, or even on the wider Gentile world beyond. It does not follow, however, that the words put into the lips of Jesus in Matthew 10 are not genuine, or that they misrepresent His consciousness of Himself. To a certain extent they have parallels in the eschatological discourse in Mark (Matt. 10 [17-22] being parallel to Mark 13 [9-13]), and to a much larger extent in Luke. In Luke, indeed, there is a peculiarity that we have two missionary or apostolic charges of Jesus, one to the Twelve (Luke 9 [1 ff.]), and another to the Seventy (Luke 10 [1 ff.]). It is not necessary here to consider whether the mission of the Seventy has any historical character, or whether it is simply invented or assumed by the evangelist as a counterpart to that of

the Twelve, a means of justifying, by appeal to Jesus, the Gentile as well as the Jewish mission. Even if this idea were in the evangelist's mind he has made no application of it. The words of Jesus which he gives, whether addressed to the Twelve or the Seventy, are substantially those which we find in Matthew addressed to the Twelve alone; and the Seventy in point of fact never approach Gentiles. They prepare the way of the Lord in Palestine. Considering how little we know of the methods of Jesus, it is probably rash to say that the mission of this larger number of disciples only embodies a thought of Luke, and not a historical fact.

The first point in which the evangelists are agreed is that Jesus in sending out His disciples imparted to them power over evil spirits. The importance which this power had in His own mind will appear later. What is to be observed here is that we see already Him who had been baptized with the Holy Spirit and power baptizing His followers with the same. It was a primary experience of the Twelve that they owed to Jesus such a reinforcement of their spiritual resources as enabled them to vanquish the most hideous manifestations of demonic power and malignity. They could heal those who were under the tyranny of the devil because He had sent and empowered them. It does not matter what theory we hold of demonic possession and its cure—whether we believe, as every one believed then, in bad spirits which invaded and victimised wretched men; or in mental and perhaps moral disorders ranging from hysteria to the wildest forms of madness—some experience of the disciples lies behind the words, He gave them authority over the unclean spirits. They could do what they could not do before because He enabled them to do it, and the sense of this is a rudimentary form of the specifically Christian consciousness. The greatness of Jesus would grow upon

them in a thousand ways, but this was one of the experiences in which it was signally if mysteriously made real.

The power over unclean spirits belongs to the gracious side of the commission, but what strikes one most in the brief report of Mark (6 [11]), with its parallels in Matthew (10 [14]) and Luke (9 [5]), is the severity with which Jesus speaks. He lives in the sense of the absolute significance of His message. It is not something on which He proposes to negotiate with men—a matter in regard to which there is room for reflection and for arranging terms. It is in the highest degree urgent, and it is a matter of life and death. 'Into whatsoever city ye enter and they receive you not, go out into the streets and say, Even the dust that cleaves to us from your city on our feet we wipe off against you. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.' There is nothing, it may be said, personal in this: nothing that tends to put Jesus into a place apart. Religion, as philosophers tell us, is always a form of the absolute consciousness; and in presenting His message in this absolute and uncompromising tone Jesus only exhibits Himself as a supremely religious spirit. Even if we could insulate the words just cited it might be doubted whether this interpretation did justice to them; but when we take them in connexion with all that has preceded—with the consciousness with which Jesus entered on His work, as revealed in the narratives of the Baptism and Temptation, and with His communication to the disciples of His own power to cast out evil spirits, and so to give a kind of sacramental pledge that the Kingdom of God had drawn near—it is certain that it does not do them justice. Jesus counted for more than a voice in the preaching of the Kingdom, and though the Twelve might have been puzzled at the time to say

for what more, they must have felt the quick of the matter touched when He said, Behold, it is I who send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves (Matt. 10 [16]). There was a sense in which He could call the cause of God *His* cause, as not even the most devoted of prophets could do; He was identified with it and it with Him in a way to which the past afforded no parallel; and as this sunk ever deeper and deeper into the minds of His followers they grew unconsciously to a more adequate—let us say, a more Christian—view of what their Master was, and of what ought to be their own attitude to Him.

The second part of the charge to the Twelve in Matthew (chapter 10 [17 ff.]) has parallels chiefly in the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of Luke. The situation which it contemplates is in the main that of the followers of Jesus in Palestine in the generation after His death. The various sayings of which it is composed are addressed, perhaps, rather to disciples in general than to the apostles; but they have a special application to those who led the new community and represented it before men. What we have to remember in reading it is that it was not spoken at one time, and certainly not on the one occasion when Jesus sent out the Twelve two and two; but it is a quite gratuitous supposition that the mind which it expresses is not the mind of Jesus, or that the words in which it is conveyed are not substantially His words. Some of them, as has already been pointed out, have parallels in the eschatological discourse in Mark 13; and it seems to the writer incredible that Jesus should have left His cause and His followers in the world without a word to guide or brace them for the perilous future. He cannot but have looked forward to the task and the trials which awaited them, and the fact that much of what is recorded in this chapter has this task and these trials in view is no proof that the words are not His. It only shows that when the

time came He felt and spoke as the call of the time required.

The very first words in Matthew (10 17 f.) bring us to the heart of our subject. 'Beware of men. For they will hand you over to councils, and in their synagogues they shall scourge you. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings, too, on My account (ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ), for a testimony to them and to the gentiles.' The words 'on My account' make it clear that in the mind of the writer at least the work of the disciples was somehow identified with Jesus. In all their preaching and healing they must have referred to Him; the cause which they represented stood or fell with their relation to Him; it was for His sake that they themselves were identified with the cause. This, no doubt, is the truth. It answers to everything we know of the attitude of the earliest Christians to Jesus and the gospel. But it has been questioned whether the words ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ, though they truly represent the attitude of the first disciples, as truly represent the consciousness or the claim of Jesus. They occur again in ver. 39, and Harnack omits them there because they are wanting in the parallel in Luke (17 33).[1] Here Luke has no independent parallel, but a parallel is found in Mark 13 9 and (probably in dependence on Mark) in Luke 21 12. The passage in Mark occurs in the eschatological discourse, but not in the little (Jewish?) apocalypse which many recognise as embedded in that discourse; on the contrary, it is generally admitted to be part of the oldest tradition concerning Jesus. But it also contains ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ, which is varied in Luke into ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός μου, for My name's sake. All three evangelists, it may be remarked, at the close of this paragraph in the eschatological discourse, unite in the synonymous expression διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου (Matt. 24 9, Mark 13 13,

[1] *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, 63.

Luke 21 [17]). This alone would make us hesitate to question the words 'for My sake' in Matt. 10 [18]; but we hesitate all the more, indeed we feel that all ground for suspense is taken away, when we notice that Jesus in this very chapter says the same thing over and over, both explicitly and implicitly, in terms which no one ventures to doubt. Thus in ver. 32 f.: 'Every one therefore who shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father in heaven.' The parallel here between Matthew and Luke is exceedingly close, the use of the Semitic idiom ὁμολογεῖν ἐν in both evangelists being among the clearest evidences of the essentially identical translations which they employed of the Aramaic sayings of Jesus.[1] But if Jesus really used these words about confessing and denying Him before men, and about being confessed and denied accordingly by Him before God, why should He not have said, Ye shall be brought before governors and kings *for My sake?* It is impossible to exaggerate the solemnity of the utterance in Matt. 10 [32 f.], or the greatness of the claim which it makes. It says as clearly as language can say it that fidelity to Jesus is that on which the final destiny of man depends. It is the testimony of Jesus to men on which at last they stand or fall before God, and this testimony is concentrated on the question whether or not they have been loyal to Him. One indubitable word like this lights up for us much which might have remained obscure, and raises into full assurance much which might have left room for question. The mind out of which it sprung can only be the mind of one who is conscious that He is related as no other can be to the purposes of God and to the life of men; conscious, to express it otherwise, that the place in which New

[1] J. H. Moulton, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 104.

Testament faith sets its Lord is the place due to Himself. It has often been pointed out that Jesus does not here represent Himself as the final Judge by whose verdict man's destiny is decided, but only as the great Witness by whose testimony the verdict is determined. But it does not matter whether we call Him judge or witness. The real point is that what He speaks of as having absolute significance in the final judgment is the attitude of men to Himself as faithful or unfaithful. It is on this that everything depends; and if we bear on our minds a true impression of this tremendous saying, and admit that it reflects the mind of Christ about Himself and His relation to God and men, we shall be slow to question the place which He holds in all New Testament faith.

So much of the scepticism about the 'Christian' elements in the gospel—so much of the disposition to ascribe them to the faith of the Church in the Risen Lord instead of to the historical Jesus—rests upon the failure to appreciate words like this, that it is worth while to insist both on their genuineness and their meaning. They are not only found both in Matthew and in Luke, but, as has just been observed, they are found in both with a peculiarity of expression (ὁμολογεῖν ἐν) which shows that the evangelists used the same translation of an Aramaic source. The saying therefore was current and on record, in the language in which Jesus spoke, before it was taken into our gospels. The fact that Luke speaks of Jesus confessing or denying men 'before the angels of God,' while Matthew has 'before My Father in heaven,' may not require any particular explanation: Luke may have unconsciously conceived the scenery of the final judgment more picturesquely than Matthew. But it is probable that this variation, as well as Luke's use of 'the Son of Man' (in ch. 12 [8]) where Matthew has 'I,' are rather to be explained by reference to a similar passage

found in all the evangelists (Mark 8 [38], Matt. 16 [27], Luke 9 [26]). There the angels and the Son of Man are combined in the picture of the judgment, and the familiarity of that solemn scene would involuntarily occasion such reminiscences of it as can here be traced in Luke. The freedom with which the essential import of the words of Jesus is given only sets that import in relief. In words which circulated in the Church from the beginning He proclaimed the absolute significance of His own person, and identified loyalty to Himself with loyalty to God and His cause. One of the peculiarities of the fourth gospel on the ground of which its historical character has been depreciated is that it is perpetually emphasising this absolute significance of Jesus in abstract forms. It represents Jesus saying of Himself I am, ἐγώ εἰμι, without any predicate, as if the evangelist in his sense of Jesus' greatness had become inarticulate. It is as though he had something to say about his Lord—or rather as though Jesus had something to say about Himself—to which no human language was equal; the absolute unqualified 'I am' (John 8 [24-28]: also ver. 58)? means that no words can exhaust His significance; He is the all-decisive personality on relation to whom everything turns. It cannot be questioned that the fourth gospel is written in the language of the evangelist rather than in that of Jesus: but is there anything in its boldest assertions of the absolute significance of Jesus which transcends this thoroughly attested word in Matt. 10 [32]? The writer is unable to see it. The attitude to Himself on the part of men which is here explicitly claimed by Jesus —the absolute loyalty which involves an absolute trust —it is literally impossible to transcend. It is not only in Christian faith, as we find it expressed in the apostolic epistles, but in the consciousness of Jesus, that this religious relation of men to Him is rooted. It is not only

that they identify themselves with Him in a fidelity indistinguishable from that which is due to God alone, but that He, in the most solemn, explicit, and overpowering words, requires from them that identification, and makes their eternal destiny depend upon it.

This is the more remarkable when we consider the condition under which this loyalty to Jesus has to be displayed. It may require, He tells His followers, the sacrifice of the tenderest natural affection. The connexion between Matt. 10[33] and Matt. 10[34] may be due to the evangelist—the parallels are not connected in Luke—but even if it is, it answers to the truth. When Jesus claimed confession, He thought of what would make it hard; and whether He spoke of this at the moment or not, He did speak of it, and Matthew appropriately introduces His words here. The parallel in Luke is not close, so much so that Harnack doubts whether the common source on which the evangelists so largely depend does lie behind them at this point. Even if it does not, he holds that in the last resort some common source is implied; and we may fairly say that whether or not we are dealing with the very words of Jesus, we are in contact with His mind. Matthew's report is the simplest. 'Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.' Perhaps the key to this passage is to be found in the consideration that Jesus speaks in it out of His own experience. Fidelity to God on His part introduced misunderstanding and division into the home at Nazareth. His mother could

not comprehend Him. His brothers did not believe in Him. We can see from the incident preserved in Mark $3^{20\,f.}$, $^{31\,ff.}$, and Matt. $12^{46\,ff.}$, what painful tension resulted in the family relations. Jesus must have loved His mother and His brothers with a natural affection as pure and strong as His nature; can we estimate the pain it cost Him to recognise that their influence over Him was deliberately exerted to obstruct or frustrate His work? If the sword of which Simeon prophesied pierced the heart of Mary as she heard her Son say, Who is My mother and who are My brothers?—ruling her and them alike out of His life as unable to understand and not entitled to interfere—did it not pierce His own heart also? He knew in experience the pang it cost to be thus cruel to what was after all a genuine natural affection; but, though He felt the pain more keenly than those on whom it was inflicted, His calling demanded that He should be thus cruel; and the law under which He Himself lived was that to which He called all His followers.

Only, there is one significant difference. What He does for the sake of His calling, He requires them to do for His sake. The consciousness of His unique significance, of the solitary and peculiar place which He holds in the working out of the purposes of God, is always apparent when He speaks of His having come for this or that end. It is so, for example, in Matt. 5^{17} (*I came* not to destroy, but to fulfil), or in Matt. 9^{13} (*I came* not to call the righteous but sinners), or in Luke 19^{10} (*The Son of Man came* to seek and to save that which was lost); it is so here when He says, *I came* not to bring peace but a sword. Jesus is thinking and speaking deliberately about Himself and His work in the world, and in what amazing words He speaks! He contemplates the agonising disruption of families which will take place according as He is or is not accepted by the mem-

bers of them, and He says deliberately that the dearest and most intimate bond is to be broken rather than the bond of fidelity to Him. Whom does the man make Himself, what place does He venture to claim in the relations of God and human beings, who with clear consciousness says—He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me? This is personal, concrete language, asserting an immediate relation of the Speaker and of all who hear Him; but it is for this very reason far more wonderful than any formal assumption of a title or a dignity could be. It makes a far deeper impression on us, if it makes any impression at all, than if Jesus had claimed in set terms to be the Messiah or the Son of God or the Son of Man. There is something in it which for boldness transcends all that such titles suggest. It involves the exercise of whatever authority we can conceive them to confer: it exhibits Jesus acting as one too great for any title to describe—as one with right to a name which is above every name. It is thoroughly in harmony with the utterance already considered about confessing and denying Him; and all the more if it were spoken in another context does it justify us in believing that, wonderful and almost incredible as it is, it is a vital part of the self-revelation of Jesus. We repeat that there is nothing in the New Testament, not even in Paul or John, which goes beyond it; and it will be admitted, unless we wantonly deny that it is from the lips of Jesus, that that is no true Christianity which comes short of it.

Much interest has gathered round the passage in Luke which is usually and no doubt rightly regarded as parallel to this, because of its use of the extraordinary word 'hate.' 'If any man comes to Me and does not hate his father

and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple' (Luke 14 [26]). There is a certain amount of generalisation here, which may be editorial, for Luke is discussing the conditions of following Jesus; but the mind of the Speaker and the claim He makes upon others are indistinguishable from what we find in Matthew, and curiosity or perplexity centres on the word 'hate.' It is often assumed that this is a fanatical extravagance, conceivable enough in a Church maddened by persecution, and hardly knowing what it said in the vehemence with which it asserted its fidelity to Jesus, but inconceivable in the lips of Jesus Himself. This, however, is not so clear. Loisy is disposed to think that as the most expressive and the most absolute the formula of Luke may be more primitive than that of Matthew. The latter softens down the terrible severity of the original: to say that we must not love father or mother, son or daughter, more than Jesus, is not so staggering as to say that we must hate them all to follow Him. It suits better the reality of existence and the common condition of men.[1] The question is a difficult one, and perhaps not to be answered at all by weighing Matthew and Luke against each other. The conditions of discipleship must often have been discussed by Jesus, and it may be that where divergences of this kind occur we have to consider not two reports of the same saying, but two lessons on the same subject. Such memorable words of Jesus were no doubt familiar in the Church, not only through Matthew and Luke, or through a written source antecedent to them, but through the oral teaching of the original disciples; and even if Matthew and Luke rested in the main on a common document for their knowledge of the Lord's words, there is no reason why

[1] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. 894.

they should not have been influenced here or there by reminiscences of these words in forms familiar to them independently of that document. It is not necessary to suppose that Matthew mitigated the severity of Luke, or that Luke intensified to fanaticism the austerity of Matthew. There may be no intention at all in the differences between them. If an opinion may be expressed on purely subjective grounds, the writer is inclined to agree with Loisy that the term 'hate' goes back to Jesus. But it is surely a mistake to say that it suggests the small account (*le peu de cas*) which is to be made of family bonds and affections where the Kingdom of heaven is concerned. There is nothing in either evangelist about the Kingdom of heaven; what Jesus speaks of in both is the relation of men to Himself—their being worthy or not worthy of Him, able or unable to be His disciples. His significance is not merged in the Kingdom; it is the very peculiarity of the passages that the significance of the Kingdom is absorbed in Him. Psychologically it seems probable that the terrible word 'hate' expresses the pain with which Jesus Himself had made the renunciation which He demands from others. He knew how sore it was, and 'hate' is a kind of vehement protest against the pleas to which human nature, and much that is good in it, as well as much that is evil, is only too ready to give a hearing. It is as though He could not afford to let these tender voices be heard, so painful would it be to silence them. But this is the very opposite of making small account of them—*peu de cas*, as M. Loisy puts it—and we are glad to think it is the very opposite.

In both Matthew and Luke the saying which requires the sacrifice of natural affection is followed immediately by another which raises the claim of Jesus, if it be possible, to a still higher point. In Matthew's form it runs,

'And he that doth not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me' (Matt. 10 [38]). The habit of generalising the idea of the cross, and applying to it any difficulty or pain that comes in the way of duty, blinds many to the extraordinary force of these words. The cross was the instrument of execution, and the condemned criminal, as we see from the case of Jesus Himself, had to carry it to the place of punishment. The English equivalent of the words in Matt. 10 [38] is that no one is worthy of Jesus who does not follow Him, as it were, with the rope round his neck—ready to die the most ignominious death rather than prove untrue. Whether ver. 39 was spoken in this connexion or not, it was again a true instinct which led the evangelist to introduce it here: 'He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake (ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ) shall find it.' The typical Christian is the martyr, the man who lays down his life in the cause which is identical with Jesus; it is he who is sure of immortality: the life of the Kingdom of God, incorruptible and glorious, is his. On the other hand, the man who, when it comes to the decisive point, declines the cross and falls short of the supreme devotion required of the martyr, forfeits everything. In the immortality of which the martyr is assured he has neither part nor lot; in saving his life he has lost it. It is not to be doubted that this is the primary meaning of the words in the gospel, however they may have to be attenuated to match with circumstances in which no one is crucified or hanged for following Jesus; and, read in this sense, they confirm and deepen the impression of all that precedes.

To the use which has just been made of this passage two objections are commonly raised. One is that the saying about taking up the cross obviously refers to the death of Jesus as something which had already taken place, and that therefore it cannot be regarded as coming

from Jesus Himself. Holtzmann[1] even thought at one time that such passages as Gal. 2 [19f.], where Paul speaks of being crucified with Christ, were the antecedents of the gospel sayings about the cross. But as Loisy—who nevertheless questions the genuineness of the words ascribed to Jesus—points out, the meaning of Paul is not that of the passage before us.[2] When the true meaning here is fixed, the writer can only say that he sees no difficulty whatever in believing that Jesus spoke in precisely such terms. He was not the first person to be crucified; and though crucifixion was not a Jewish but a Roman punishment, it was one that a hundred years of Roman government must have made sufficiently familiar and terrible even to the Jews. If Jesus could say to His followers, The man who is not ready to face the most shameful death in My cause is not worthy of Me, there is no reason why He should not have said, The man who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. The fact, which His hearers certainly could not foresee at the moment, that He was Himself to die upon the Cross, would give a singular pathos to His words when they recalled them afterwards; but a knowledge of that fact was not necessary to the understanding of them. The other objection refers to the words ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ in Matt. 10 [39]. In what is regarded as the parallel saying in Luke 17 [33]—'Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it'—ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ is wanting. Hence Harnack in his restoration of Q would omit them from this saying: he thinks Matthew has introduced them from Mark.[3] On this ground some would object to the use which we make of the words as throwing light on Jesus' consciousness of Himself; what He says of saving the

[1] *Handcommentar, ad loc.* [2] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. 895.
[3] *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 63.

life and losing it (the objection runs) is said with the utmost generality; it is a law of the Kingdom of God, but it has no necessary relation to Him. That it is a law of the Kingdom of God is true, but that it has no necessary relation to Jesus must not be taken for granted; that is the very point at issue. The whole burden of the words of Jesus, as we have read them hitherto, is that He has a relation to the Kingdom of God which makes it possible for Him to say things which no other could say; and it may quite well be so here. Not that we should lay any stress on the occurrence of ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ in Matt. 10 [39]. It is quite likely that a saying which Jesus must often have repeated, and which occurs twice in both Matthew and Luke, was not always given in exactly the same words. The principle might sometimes be stated in its absolute generality, and sometimes so as to bring out the peculiar way in which Jesus was identified with the cause for which men were to be prepared to die. That He was identified with it in some peculiar way has been made abundantly clear already, and does not depend in the least on whether ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ was introduced into Matt. 10 [39] by the evangelist or not. The parallel in Luke 17 [33], which omits it, is certainly in every other respect secondary and inferior to Matthew: it is the evangelist there who is responsible for περιποιήσασθαι and ζωογονήσει, and who may be responsible for the absence of ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ. In the passage in which Mark preserves this saying, and in which Matthew and Luke repeat it (Mark 8 [35], Matt. 16 [25], Luke 9 [24]), all three agree in inserting the words. But, as has already been remarked, the legitimacy of using the passage to illumine the consciousness of Jesus does not depend upon whether on any given occasion he added ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ when He spoke of saving the life or losing it. The principle of that addition is secured if we admit that Jesus said, He that loveth father or mother more

than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me is not worthy of Me; the evangelist not only acted with a good conscience, he wrote out of the same mind of Christ which is revealed in ver. 39 when he inserted (if he did insert) ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ in ver. 40. There is nothing theological in the attitude of Jesus here, no filling of a rôle, whether it be the Messianic or another, but there is the revelation of a consciousness to which history presents no parallel. Consider how great this Man is who declares that the final destiny of men depends on whether or not they are loyal to Him, and who demands absolute loyalty though it involve the sacrifice of the tenderest affections, or the surrender of life in the most ignominious death. It is hard to take it in—so hard that multitudes of minds seem to close automatically against it, and yet there is nothing surer in the gospel record.

The real difficulty in accepting these sayings is the antipathy of the general mind to the supernatural. It is one form of this when people refuse to believe in miracles, and declare that a man who can still a storm with a word, or feed five thousand people with five loaves, or call the dead to life, is a man with no reality for them. The Jesus who lived a historical life must have lived it within common historical and human limits, and when actions are ascribed to Him which transcend these limits, we know that we have lost touch with fact. The same intellectual tendency which leads to this conclusion really, however, pushes much further. Its latent conviction is not only that Jesus must only have done what other people could do, but that Jesus can only have been what other people are. The mystery of personality is admitted and perhaps enlarged upon by those who thus judge, but the measure of Jesus is taken beforehand. A person who seriously says what Jesus says in Matt.

10[32-38] is a person for whom their world has no room, and they have no disposition to reconstruct it so that it shall have room. Such a person is not one more added to the population, who can be accommodated or can find accommodation for himself, like the rest. He is not another like our neighbours, with whom we can negotiate, and to whom we can more or less be what they are to us. He stands alone. In the strictest sense which we can put upon the words He is a supernatural person. He claims a unique place in our life. As our examination of the New Testament has shown, His followers have always given Him such a place; and what we wish to insist upon is that in doing so they have not propagated a religion inconsistent with His will, but have only recognised the facts involved in His revelation of Himself.

It may quite well be that there are those who do not wish to give Him the place He claimed, and the place He held from the beginning in the faith of His disciples. It is impossible to have a merely intellectual relation to a person: all relations to persons are moral. The person who comes before us speaking as Jesus speaks in this passage is least of all one in whom we can have only a scientific interest. If we admit the reality of the Person, we feel at once that He not only said these things to men in Palestine, but is saying them to ourselves now; and to feel this is to be brought face to face with the supreme moral responsibility. It is not always in human nature to welcome this, and the instinctive desire of human nature to avoid responsibility so exacting and tremendous is no doubt a latent motive in much of the disintegrating criticism of the self-revelation of Jesus. It is not saying anything personal to say this. There is that in man which does not wish to have anything to do with such a person as Jesus here reveals Himself to be; and when that

element in man tells upon the criticism of the gospels, it tells as a solvent on all that gives Jesus His peculiar place. Nevertheless, His place is sure. There are things too wonderful for invention or imagination, things which could never have been conceived unless they were true; and not to speak of the witness of the Spirit, or their historical authentication, the sayings of Jesus that we have just been considering belong to this class of things. We should accept them, were it for nothing else, because of the incredible way in which they transcend all imaginable words of common men.

The Sermon on the Mount

(Matt. 5–7, Luke 6^{20-49}, and other parallels to Matthew)

A considerable part of the matter common to Matthew and Luke is found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7, Luke 6^{20-49}). This sermon, as it is presented in Matthew, is to a large extent the composition of the evangelist, but it is not an arbitrary or free composition. Comparison with Luke shows that the framework of it was fixed before either evangelist wrote: it began with beatitudes and ended with the parable of the builders on the rock and the sand, and it had as its kernel the enforcement, in the boldest and most paradoxical terms, of the supremacy of the law of love. In all probability, therefore, an actual discourse of Jesus, corresponding to this in outline, lay behind it; and when Matthew, according to his custom—a custom which we have just seen illustrated in His charge to the Twelve—expands this by introducing into it congruous or relevant matter which strictly belonged to other occasions, we have no call to say that he is misrepresenting Jesus. In point of fact, a large proportion of what he does introduce, though not found in Luke's Sermon on the Mount, is found elsewhere in the third evangelist, and is recog-

nised by critics as belonging to the oldest stratum of evangelic tradition. It is impossible to evade the impression that in both evangelists the sermon has the character of a manifesto, and it is the more important therefore to read it with a view to the self-consciousness of the Speaker. It may be alleged, indeed, that this character of manifesto is imposed upon it by the evangelists, and that it is only their conception of Jesus which can be inferred from it, not Jesus' sense of His own position and authority. Perhaps if the Sermon on the Mount stood alone in the gospels the case for this opinion would have more weight, but when we remember the self-revelation of Jesus in such utterances as have already been examined, we shall probably feel that we ought not to be too hasty in declaring that this or that is due not to Him but to the reporter.

There are three particulars which we have to consider in this connexion.

(1) Both in Matthew and in Luke the sermon begins with beatitudes, and though the beatitudes differ considerably both in number and in expression they have this singular feature in common, that at a certain point the address, so to speak, becomes more personal; the beatitude is put with emphasis in the second person, and —what is to be particularly noticed—the personality of Jesus Himself is introduced into it. 'Blessed,' it runs in Matthew, 'are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely *for My sake*' (5 [11]). In Luke it reads, 'Blessed are ye when men hate you and when they separate you and reproach you and cast out your name as evil (or: give you a bad name[1]) *for the Son of Man's sake.*' When we remember that the words of Jesus were at first preserved

[1] Wellhausen thinks the Aramaic original had this meaning: *Das Evangelium Lucae*, 24.

by being preached, we need not be astonished at such variations as the one underlined. To the preacher, Jesus and the Son of Man were one, but the Son of Man was a solemn way of saying Jesus; and it would be natural for him to put this title into Jesus' lips whenever he was reproducing words in which the personality of the Speaker was of signal importance. There is not more in 'for the Son of Man's sake' than in 'for My sake,' but it has a certain rhetorical advantage; there is more in it for the ear and the imagination; and when the word of Jesus was not backed, so to speak, by His bodily presence, but only reported by a preacher, we can understand the preacher's motive for preferring the title to the pronoun. Harnack, however, and many others have argued that here, as at Matt. 10[39], the words referring to the person of Jesus should be omitted altogether.[1] The mere fact that Matthew and Luke vary in reporting them, in the way which has just been explained, is certainly no reason for omitting them: and just as little are the other variations which have some MS. support. The old Syriac versions read 'for My name's sake,' which is possibly not a variant, but an idiomatic rendering of ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ; and it is only a mechanical repetition from the previous verse when some 'Western' MSS. read 'for righteousness' sake' instead of 'for My sake.' There is no authority whatever for any form of the beatitude which does not represent the reproach and persecution of which the disciples were the objects as taking place on account of something; and if Jesus could speak of Himself as we have seen Him speak in the charge to the Twelve—if He could say, Whoso confesseth Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father in heaven—there is no reason why He should not have said, Blessed are ye when men shall revile you for My sake. The truth rather is that the suffering

[1] See above, p. 210: Harnack, *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 40.

which good men always endure in a bad world—that is, suffering for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5 [10])—becomes, where the disciples of Jesus are concerned, definitely and specifically suffering for His sake. That is not only their consciousness about it, but His; it is not only the mind of the evangelists which we encounter in this ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ or ἕνεκεν τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; it is the mind of the Lord Himself.[1] We cannot measure what it means that a person who lived a human life like others should identify Himself in this extraordinary way with the cause of God and righteousness and should, it is not enough to say *claim*, but rather *assume that He will obtain*, that martyr devotion to which only righteousness and God are entitled; but until we see this we do not see Jesus. A beatitude combines the expression of a rare and high virtue with a rare and high felicity: what are we to say of the Person for whom the supreme beatitude is that men should suffer shame for His sake? We may surely say that He is revealing Himself as the Person to whom the only legitimate attitude is the attitude of the New Testament Christians to their Lord.

(2) The second point in the Sermon on the Mount which calls for particular consideration here is what may be described as the legislative consciousness of Jesus. A great part of the sermon in Matthew—that in which Jesus contrasts the new law of the Kingdom with what was said to them of old time—is not reproduced in Luke, but it can hardly have been unknown to him. In ch. 6 [29 f.] he has a parallel to that critical part of it which is preserved in Matt. 5 [39 f.], and in ch. 6 [27] the peculiar and awkward expression ἀλλὰ ὑμῖν λέγω τοῖς ἀκούουσιν (but I say unto you that hear) seems most easily explained as due to the influence of the formula which

[1] On the various readings and the interpretations of this passage, v. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 193.

recurs in Matthew, Ye have heard that it was said, but I say unto you.[1] The common source of Matthew and Luke must therefore have represented Jesus in that attitude which is fully illustrated in Matt. 5^{21-48}—the attitude of one conscious that in Himself the earlier revelation of God's will has been transcended, and a new and higher revelation made. It did not belong to Luke's purpose, writing as he did for Gentile Christians, whose interest in the Old Law was slight, to emphasise this contrast; and though it is emphasised in Matthew, who had in view a community brought up under the law as Judaism understood it, it does not originate with him. It is earlier than either evangelist, and undoubtedly goes back to Jesus Himself. Possibly He did not on any one occasion accumulate all the illustrations of it which Matthew gathers into his sermon here, but, as we shall see, he betrays in innumerable ways the sense of the originality and absoluteness of the revelation which has come into the world in Him. It is quite common to speak of Jesus as a prophet, and so even disciples spoke of Him from the first (Luke 24^{19}), but in truth there can be no greater contrast than that of the prophetic consciousness, as we can discern it from the Old Testament, and the consciousness of Jesus as it is revealed in the Sermon on the Mount. There is not in the Old Testament the remotest analogy to such words as, Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, but I say unto you. The sovereign legislative authority which breathes throughout the Sermon on the Mount stands absolutely alone in Scripture. It is the more remarkable, when we consider the profound reverence which Jesus had for the earlier revelation, that He moves in this perfect freedom and independence in presence of it. If any one says that it is the evangelist to whom

[1] See B. Weiss, *Das Matthäusevangelium u. seine Lucas-parallelen*, 170, 174.

this representation is due—that it is he who pictures Jesus as legislating in this tone of sovereignty and finality —and that we cannot reason from His recurrent formula, Ye have heard, but I say unto you, to the mind of Jesus Himself, we are entitled to ask for the ground of such an assertion. Even if we granted that the recurrent formula of the evangelist did not reproduce the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus, we should be entitled to say that it condensed the impression which the teaching and the attitude of Jesus made on some one in immediate contact with Him; and such an impression is part of the word of the Lord, whether it is given in words which He Himself used or not. But it is only if we insulate the report of the Sermon, and approach it with the presupposition that the Speaker cannot be any more, essentially, than one of His hearers —cannot have a relation to God or truth or the Kingdom essentially different from theirs—that we have any motive for questioning the evangelist's representation. We have only to recall the fact that behind the new Law stands the Person to whom we have been introduced in the baptism, the Person who in the beatitudes and in the charge to the Twelve claims and assumes that He will find an absolute devotion on the part of men, to feel that the formula of the evangelist is the congruous and natural expression of Jesus' consciousness of Himself. If He said other things about which no question could reasonably be raised—if He said what we read in Matt. 5^{11}, Matt. $10^{32, 33, 37}$—then there is not the slightest reason to suppose that He could not have spoken of Himself as He does throughout the legislative part of the Sermon; and there is the authority not only of Matthew, but of the older evangelic source common to Matthew and Luke, for believing that He did so speak. So far from the representation in the evangelist being historically incredible, it falls in with all that is most

surely known of Jesus' sense of what He was; it belongs to the completeness and concrete reality of the testimony concerning Him, that when He spoke of the new law of life for His disciples He should speak not otherwise but with the deliberate sovereign authority which is again and again exhibited here.

No mention has yet been made of the words with which the sermon proper, and the relation of Jesus to the new law and the old, are introduced in Matthew: Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. There is no exact parallel to this saying elsewhere in the gospels, though if we may judge from many examples Jesus was in the habit of reflecting on His mission, and giving expression to His reflections, in this form. For instance, *I came* not to call the righteous, but sinners (Matt. 9 [13]); *I came* not to send peace but a sword (Matt. 10 [34 f.]); *The Son of Man came* not to be ministered unto but to minister (Matt. 20 [28]); *I came* to cast fire upon the earth (Luke 12 [49]); *The Son of Man came* to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19 [11]). Several of these instances are found also in Mark, and the same formula occurs with characteristic variations in John: *I came* that they might have life (10 [10]); *I came* not to judge the world (12 [47]); for this cause *have I come* into the world that I might bear witness to the truth (18 [37]). The recurrence of this mode of thought and expression in all the gospels is most easily understood on the assumption that it goes back to Jesus Himself; it was so characteristic of Him to think and speak of the purpose of His mission—He was so distinctly an object of thought to Himself—that no one could report Him truly who did not report this. Hence the much-discussed saying of Matthew 5 [17] is in all probability genuine. That as an expression of the real attitude and the actual achievement

of Jesus it is both true and felicitous, there is no reason to deny, and it is not easy to see why it should be ascribed not to Him, but to another reflecting on His significance. We have seen much reason to believe that no one reflected so profoundly on His significance as He did Himself, and the very fact that one subject of reflection was His relation to the ancient revelation, alike in law and in prophecy, proves how singular His consciousness of Himself must have been. Think it out as we may, it was Jesus' consciousness of Himself that all that God had initiated in the earlier dispensation of requirement and promise was to be consummated in Him; and that puts Him into a solitary and incomparable place. That is the place which He holds in the faith of the primitive Church, but He does not owe it to that faith. It is the place which throughout His life He assumes as His own; He only accepts it from the believing Church because He has all along made it apparent that it is His due. It is not necessary for our purpose to go into detail about the relation of Jesus to the Law;[1] and His consciousness of Himself in relation to prophecy, or to the purpose of God as adumbrated and initiated in the Old Testament, will come up better in another connexion.

(3) The third point in the Sermon on the Mount at which the self-consciousness of Jesus is opened to us is that in which He is represented as the final Judge of men. Here there is some difficulty in determining what precisely Jesus said. In both Matthew and Luke, what immediately precedes the close of the Sermon is the passage on the trees which bear good and bad fruit. It is by their fruit they are known, and Matthew prepares for what is to follow by inserting verse 19: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. This has nothing corresponding to it in

[1] See article 'Law in the New Testament' in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*.

Luke, who introduces at this point a saying found much later in Matt. (12 [35]), carrying on the idea that as trees are to be known by their fruit, so men also have unmistakable ways of showing what they are. But after this little divergence the two evangelists run parallel again. The difficulty is, that though the parallelism is unmistakable it is far from close, and that the elements of it have to be brought together from different quarters in Luke. The passage is so important that it is worth while to go into some detail. In Matt. 7 [21-23] we read: 'Not every one who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many shall say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many mighty works? And then shall I openly declare unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work lawlessness.' In Luke's account of the Sermon only the first sentence of this has an echo at the corresponding place (6 [46]): 'And why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' The formula Lord, Lord, the occurrence of the saying at this precise point, and the use to which it is put, are a strong argument that some equivalent of it stood here in the source common to Matthew and Luke. It is not apparent, however, that this equivalent, which according to Harnack [1] was probably more remote from Matthew and Luke than the source they ordinarily used in common, made any reference to the last judgment. Such a reference, nevertheless, which is introduced by Matthew here, is found further on in Luke in parabolic form (13 [26 f.]). The parable deals with persons who to their own astonishment find themselves at last excluded from the Kingdom—the same class of person in view in Matt.

[1] *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 52.

$7^{22\,f.}$ 'Then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in Thy presence, and Thou didst teach in our streets. And He shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from Me, all ye workers of unrighteousness.' It is usually argued that in comparison with Matt. $7^{22\,f.}$ this must be the more accurate version of Jesus' words. He is speaking to His contemporaries, and when He is represented—for He is of course the *οἰκοδεσπότης* of the parable—as saying to them at last, I do not know you (Luke 13^{25}), it is easy to imagine their astonished remonstrance: 'Not know us! Why, we ate and drank with you, and it was in our streets you taught.' In comparison with this, Matthew's version reads much more like a preacher's application of the words of Jesus in the apostolic age, and with its experiences in view, than like a precise report of what Jesus said. There was no such thing as prophesying in the name of Jesus till after Pentecost, and the words which Matthew puts into the lips of Jesus would not have been intelligible to any one when the Sermon on the Mount was spoken. No one then had seen or could anticipate prophesying, casting out devils, and working miracles, by the name of Jesus. But while this is so, the application which the evangelist makes to his contemporaries in the apostolic church—as though Jesus were speaking to *them*, and not to His own contemporaries in His lifetime—of the words which Jesus actually used, is quite legitimate; it does not in the least misrepresent the mind of Jesus. In Matthew and in Luke alike—in the simpler form of words which is strictly appropriate to the lips of Jesus Himself (Luke $13^{26\,f.}$), and in the more ample and rhetorical one in which the evangelist (speaking in the same spirit as Paul in 1 Cor. 13^{1-3}) strives to bring home the moral import of them to the conscience of the next generation—the attitude of Jesus is the same. It is His ac-

ceptance or rejection of men on which their final destiny depends. It is His voice by which they are admitted to or excluded from the Kingdom of God. Not that this is done arbitrarily; the very purpose of these solemn utterances is to show that there is nothing arbitrary in it. No formal recognition of Jesus, no casual acquaintance with Him, can be regarded as a substitute for doing what He says (Luke 6 [46]), or doing the will of His Father in heaven (Matt. 7 [21]). But in both gospels alike, and in a source which their very divergences at this point show to lie far behind them both, it is He who pronounces on the value of every human life. It is the consciousness that the Speaker is nothing less than the final Judge of all which makes the parable of the builders on the rock and the sand, with which the Sermon closes, the most solemn and overpowering of all the words of Jesus.

The place of Christ as Judge, a place which He has held in Christian faith from the beginning, is often presented in another light. It is regarded as a formal piece of theology, with no support in the mind of Jesus. When men came to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, they attached to Him (it is said) all the traditional Messianic predicates, and among others this, that when He came in His Messianic power He would come as Judge;[1] but the transference of these predicates to Jesus was a purely formal consequence of regarding Him as the Messiah; it was a historical accident, due to a peculiarity of the Messianic dogmatic; there is nothing vital in it, nothing which is due to Jesus Himself. There could not possibly be a more complete misconception or misrepresentation of the facts with which we have to deal in this connexion. What-

[1] How far this is true in point of fact is rather doubtful; in the Old Testament it is always God who is Judge, not the Messiah, and it is not clear that in the New Testament period the function had been transferred from God to His Anointed. See Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, c. xiii.

ever is formal in the New Testament, the belief in Jesus as Judge is not. It is a belief which may be clothed here and there in forms which Jewish theology supplied to the imagination, but it rests on personal experiences and on the sense of Jesus' attitude to men. Whatever else happened to men in the presence of Jesus, they were judged. They knew they were. They had experiences which prompted such utterances as Luke 5^{8}: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord; or John 4^{29}: Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Such experiences furnished them with irresistible evidence that this wonderful Person might be the Christ; they were not idle deductions from the fact that He was the Christ. It was impossible not to generalise them, and to realise that with everything else that Jesus might be to men, He was also their Judge. He Himself, it may be said, generalised them, or realised in His own mind all that they involved. Not to speak meanwhile of passages in which He tells of the coming of the Son of Man and of the judgment attendant upon it (*e.g.* Matt. 16^{27}, 25^{31-46}), we have in the Sermon on the Mount, when every allowance has been made which historical criticism can demand, a revelation of the mind of Jesus and of His attitude to men, which covers all that is meant by calling Him their final Judge. Resting as it does on the oldest of evangelic records, the source which lies behind the first and third gospels, and at an important point very far behind them, this revelation brings us as close to Jesus as we can historically be brought. It is not the witness of apostolic faith to which it introduces us, but the witness of Jesus to Himself. It is no exaggeration to say that it may be summed up in the solemn words of James (4^{12}): One only is the Lawgiver and Judge, and that One He with whom we are confronted here.

The Healing of the Centurion's Servant

(Matt. 8 5-13, Luke 7 1-10, 13 28-30)

In Luke the Sermon on the Mount is followed immediately by the account of Jesus' return to Capernaum, and the healing there of a centurion's servant. The same incident is recorded in Matt. 8 5-13, and comparison of Luke 7 1 with Matt. 7 28, 8 5, makes it more than probable that the sequence here indicated goes back to the common source.[1] We have this early authority, therefore, for one of the healing miracles, and in spite of the notable variation of the evangelists with regard to the centurion's mode of approaching Jesus, there is an even more notable agreement—it virtually amounts to identity—in their report both of the officers' words and of Jesus' reply. 'Sir, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only and my boy shall be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers, and I say to one Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it' (Matt. 8 8 f., Luke 7 6 ff.). The centurion evidently believed that Jesus had at His disposal spiritual messengers who could execute His commands, just as he himself had soldiers and slaves, and that therefore His personal presence was not essential to the carrying out of His will. We do not need to accept his interpretation of the way in which Jesus exercised His power: the point is that Jesus enthusiastically welcomed and approved his attitude. 'When He heard, He marvelled and said to those who followed, Verily I say unto you, not even in Israel have I found

[1] So Harnack, *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 54, who says it follows 'with certainty that great parts of the Sermon stood together in Q and were followed by this narrative.' Allen, *Commentary on St. Matthew*, p. 79, doubts this because of the remarkable differences between Matthew and Luke.

such faith.' We see here that Jesus wanted to find faith, and we see also what faith is. It is that attitude of the soul to Jesus which is confident that the saving help of God is present in Him, and that there is no limit to what it can do. It has become a commonplace to point out that whereas in the theological books of the New Testament Jesus Himself is the object of faith, in the synoptic gospels, which are truer to history, this is never the case. The only case in the synoptics in which Jesus speaks of men believing on Himself is Matt. 18^{6} (these little ones who believe on Me), and in the parallel passage in Mark 9^{42} the decisive words 'on Me' are wanting. Faith in the synoptics, it is argued—that is, faith as it was understood and required by Jesus—is always faith in God. In this there is both truth and error. God is undoubtedly the only and the ultimate object of faith, but what the synoptic gospels in point of fact present to us on this and many other occasions is (to borrow the language of 1 Peter 1^{21}) the spectacle of men who believe in God *through Him*. Their faith is their assurance that God's saving power is there, in Jesus, for the relief of their needs. Such faith Jesus demands as the condition upon which God's help becomes effective; and the more ardent and unqualified it is the more joyfully is it welcomed. The faith in Christ which is illustrated in the epistles is in essence the same thing. It has no doubt other needs and blessings in view than those which are uppermost in the synoptics, but as an attitude to Jesus it is identical with that which is there called by the same name. It will be more convenient to examine this subject further when we come to look at the self-revelation of Jesus in Mark, for there the narratives of the 'mighty works' bring it to the front: but it seemed worth while to emphasise here, in connexion with a miracle recorded in the oldest evangelic

source, the memorable utterance of Jesus in which He sets the seal of His joyous approbation on that attitude of the soul to Himself as the bearer of God's saving power in which the Christian religion has had its being from the first. There is no inconsistency here between the Christian consciousness of what Jesus is, and Jesus' consciousness of Himself.

Jesus and John the Baptist

(Matt. 11 [2-19], 21 [23-32], Luke 7 [18-35])

It has already been remarked that the only one of His contemporaries who made a strong impression upon Jesus was John the Baptist. We do not know that they ever met except on the one occasion when Jesus was baptized in Jordan, but the personality, the mission, and the method of John were much in Jesus' mind. He not only thought much, He spoke repeatedly about him. In the last days of His life He recalled John and his ministry to the Jewish authorities (Mark 11 [27 f.], Matt. 21 [23 ff.], Luke 20 [1 ff.]), and according to the fourth gospel, where John is particularly prominent, He spent some of the last weeks of His life in the scenes of the Baptist's early ministry (John 10 [40]). On different occasions He expressly compared or contrasted John with Himself, and in doing so revealed with peculiar vividness His sense of what He Himself was, and of the relation in which He stood to the whole work of God, past and to come. It is fortunate that the record of this has been preserved for the most part in the common source of Matthew and Luke (Matt. 11 [2-19], Luke 7 [18-35]), and to this we shall confine ourselves here.

There is a certain amount of difference in the historical introduction to the words of Jesus, but both evangelists tell of a message sent by the Baptist, and both give his question to Jesus in precisely the same

terms: 'Art Thou the Coming One, or must we look for another?' The message was sent because John had heard in his prison—according to Luke through his own disciples—of wonderful works wrought by Jesus. For the evangelists, these works identified Jesus as the promised Messiah: Matthew calls them expressly (ch. 11 [2]) 'the works of the Christ.' John's attitude, however, is doubtful. It has become almost a tradition in a certain school of criticism that what we have here is the dawning in John's mind for the first time of the idea that Jesus might be the Messiah; and he is supposed to send to Jesus that this nascent idea may be confirmed or corrected. The inference, of course, would be that the story of the baptism—unless John were completely excluded from all knowledge of what it involved—is false; nothing happened at that early date to make John look for anything remarkable from Jesus. But it is gratuitous to set aside the gospel tradition on such dubious grounds. John's state of mind is surely not hard to understand, even if the tradition be maintained. What ever his hopes or expectations of Jesus may have been, they were religious hopes, not mathematical certainties; they belonged to faith, and faith may always be tried and shaken. John had had much to shake his faith. The Messiah in whom be believed was one who was pre-eminently the Judge: when He came, it was to punish the wicked, and especially to right the wronged. Could Jesus be the Coming One when a man like John lay in Herod's dungeon for no other reason than that he had been faithful to the right? If Jesus were indeed the Messiah, would it not be the very first demonstration of His Messiahship He gave, that He would come and avenge upon Herod the wrongs of the just and holy man who had prepared His way? It is not the voice of dawning faith, but the appeal of disappointment ready to

break down into despair that is heard in John's question. And that this is so is confirmed by the significant words with which the direct answer of Jesus closes: Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me. This answer undoubtedly has in it a note of warning. But a note of warning is only appropriate on the evangelic, not on the so-called critical, view of the situation. Jesus would not snub nascent faith by unprovoked severity, but it was necessary for Him to warn even one whose services to God had been so distinguished as John's against stumbling at the divine as it was represented by Himself. The gospels do not speak of any one as being offended in Jesus unless He has first felt His attraction. It is people who are conscious of something in Jesus which appeals to them, and who go with Him a certain length, but then encounter something in Him which they cannot get over, who are represented as 'offended.' The warning involved in the beatitude is appropriate only to a person thus affected or in danger of being thus affected to Jesus; in other words, it is appropriate to John as a person who had once had hopes of Jesus which his own unfortunate experiences, in spite of all he heard, were making it difficult for him to sustain. It is gratuitous, therefore, to say that the narrative invalidates that of the baptism, and on any theory whatever of the spiritual history of John it throws a welcome light on Jesus' mind about Himself.

The following points in it call for special notice. First, there is the reference of Jesus to His works. 'Go and tell John the things ye see and hear: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them.' The evangelists, no one doubts, understood this literally, but it is another critical tradition that it must be taken figuratively. Perhaps it

should be taken both ways, but it is to be taken literally at least. In Matt. 11 [21-23], which with its parallel in Luke 10 [13 f.] goes back to the source we are at present depending on, Jesus speaks twice of his δυνάμεις or mighty works, and it is impossible to question that these are what we usually speak of as His miracles. Jesus appealed to His wonderful works, crowned as they were by the preaching of glad tidings to the poor, to identify Him as the Coming One. They were not, perhaps, what John expected, whose imagination was filled with the axe and the fan; but they were the true *insignia* of the Messiah. It is with the sense of their worth that Jesus adds, And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me. This sentence may be easily passed by, but there is not a word in the gospel which reveals more clearly the solitary place of Jesus. It stands on the same plane with those wonderful utterances already considered in which He speaks of confessing and denying Him before men, of hating father and mother, son and daughter for His sake. Unemphatic as it may appear, it makes the blessedness of men depend upon a right relation to Himself; happy, with the rare and high happiness on which God congratulates man, is he who is not at fault about Jesus, but takes Him for all that in His own consciousness He is. That Jesus in this informal utterance claims to be the Christ is unquestionable; or if 'claims' is an aggressive word, we can only correct it by saying that He speaks as the Christ. That is the character which He bears in His own mind, and in the consciousness of which He declares Himself. He *is* ὁ ἐρχόμενος; and He is there, the bearer of God's redeeming love, the Person through whom the purpose of God is to be achieved and His promises fulfilled. We do not need to raise any such technical question as, What precisely is meant by calling Jesus the Christ? It is

not by studying Messianic dogmatic that we learn to understand the gospels, it is in the words and deeds of Jesus that we find the material for filling with their proper meaning this and all other titles which are applied to Him. But taking this simple sentence in its simplicity we do not hesitate to say of it, as of Matt. 10[32], that there is nothing in the fourth gospel which transcends it. The attitude which it so calmly and sovereignly assumes to men, the attitude which it as calmly and sovereignly demands from men—even from men so great as John the Baptist—is precisely the attitude of Christians to their Lord in the most 'Christian' parts of the New Testament. It is not they who gratuitously, and under mistaken ideas of what He is, put Him into a place which no human being ought to give to another; but He Himself from the very beginning spontaneously assumes this place as His. The Christian faith in Christ, which the New Testament exhibits throughout, would be justified by this one word even if it stood alone.

But it does not stand alone even in this passage. The word of warning spoken by Jesus might have seemed to those who heard it to reflect upon the character of the Baptist, but the moment the messengers are gone Jesus breaks into a striking panegyric upon John.[1] He is not a reed shaken with the wind—a weak and inconstant nature. He is not clothed in soft raiment, with a silken tunic under his camel's hair—a man making his own privately out of a pretended divine mission. He is a prophet, yes, and far more than a prophet. The prophets had their place in the carrying out of God's gracious purpose towards men, but this man's place excelled theirs. Both Matthew and Luke, and no doubt therefore their source, explain this by applying to John the pro-

[1] It may be that all that is here reported does not belong to the present or to any one occasion, but this is immaterial.

phecy of Malachi (3 [1]): 'Behold I send my messenger before *thy* face who shall prepare *thy* way *before thee.*' It must be admitted that it is very difficult to suppose that these are the words of Jesus. In the Old Testament it is Israel which is addressed, and God speaks throughout in the first person: 'Behold I send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way *before Me;* and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts.' The Septuagint variations do not affect the character of the passage in this respect. But in the New Testament, both here and in Mark 1 [2], it is not Israel which is addressed, but the Messiah (notice the change of *before Me* into *before thee*); and the messenger prepares the way for the Messiah, not, as in Malachi, for God. It may be, as Zahn argues,[1] that the disciples would never have ventured on this modification of the prophecy unless Jesus had applied to Himself what is said of the earnestly expected Lord, the Mediator of the Covenant, in Malachi, but of this we cannot be sure. What is indubitable is the solemn asseveration of Jesus which follows: 'There hath not arisen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist, but he that is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he.' It does not matter whether the greatness of John is conceived as that of official dignity or that of personal character; he had both. He had an incomparably high vocation as the immediate messenger of the Kingdom, and his personality was equal to it. What does matter is that there is a still higher greatness than John's which belongs even to the least in the Kingdom. It is impossible to suppose that Jesus here thinks of the Kingdom as purely transcendent, and means that whoever

[1] Commentary on Matthew, *ad loc.*

finds an inheritance in it when it comes—all its future citizens—will stand on a higher plane than John. The μικρότερος, of whom he speaks in the passage, is only the most typical example of the μικροί, or little ones, to whom he refers so often. Taking them as a body, the citizens of the Kingdom as Jesus knows them are insignificant people—'these little ones,' or 'these little ones who believe'; but the cause with which they are identified makes them partakers in its incomparable greatness. He asserts this in all kinds of indirect ways. The smallest service done to them is registered and repaid: Whosoever shall give to drink to *one of these little ones* a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward (Matt. 10[42]). The most terrible indignation flames out against those who lead them astray: Whosoever shall offend *one of these little ones* which believe (on Me), it were better for him that a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea (Matt. 18[6]). The most wonderful privileges are asserted for them: Take heed that ye despise not *one of these little ones;* for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven—that is, they have immediate and unimpeded access to plead their cause with the Highest. The greatness of the little ones is a familiar thought with Jesus, illustrated in these and other ways, and it is only put with startling boldness when He declares that the most insignificant of them all is greater than John. But the only difference was that for the little ones Jesus and the Kingdom were realities which interpenetrated; all their hopes of the Kingdom were hopes to be realised through Him; whereas John, when this word was spoken, stood looking toward Jesus indeed, but with a look critical and perplexed. No one

who takes this attitude to Jesus knows or can know the supreme good which God bestows upon man; whatever his eminence in other respects—in ability, in public service, in native capacity for the spiritual life—the most insignificant disciple of Jesus stands on a higher plane. There is no formal 'claim' made here, but there is the revelation, on the part of Jesus, of a consciousness in relation to God and humanity in which He stands absolutely alone.

The same consciousness is implied also in the difficult saying which follows immediately in Matthew (11 [12 f.]), and which Luke gives in a considerably different form in another connexion (16 [16]). The difficulties hardly concern us here, and, fortunately, the one point which is perfectly clear is that which does concern us, namely, the consciousness of Jesus that with the ministry of John a new religious era had dawned. Up till now it had been the reign of the law and the prophets, an age of preparation and expectation, during which men could live the life of obedient routine, and wait for God to fulfil the hopes He had inspired. But with the appearance of John that more tranquil age had come to an end; men lived and they knew it, at a religious crisis; a situation had emerged which called for instant and decisive action. It is within this situation we have to interpret the difficult words ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν βιάζεται καὶ βιασταὶ ἁρπάζουσιν αὐτήν; but whether they mean that the Kingdom comes in like a whirlwind, and that violent men like the Zealots wish to bring it in so; or that at any cost of violence to themselves genuine disciples make good their share in it; or that it is invaded by aggressive publicans and sinners who (as decent people think) have no right to be there, is irrelevant to our purpose. What it concerns us to note is simply Jesus' consciousness of the new age. It dates from John, but

it is not identified with him. John, if their contemporaries will only believe it, is the promised Elijah, who is to precede the end (Mal. 4 [5], Matt. 11 [14]). Who can Jesus be, when no one less than Elijah must come to prepare His way?

The passage in which Matthew (11 [16 ff.]) and Luke (7 [31 ff.]) record the verdict of Jesus on His contemporaries—a passage in which Jesus deliberately contrasts Himself and His forerunner—is reserved till we come to consider the title Son of Man, which occurs in both writers at this point: meanwhile we proceed to examine what is in some ways a critically important section in the gospels, Matt. 11 [25-27] with the parallel in Luke 10 [21-22].

The Great Thanksgiving of Jesus

(Matt. 11 [25-27], Luke 10 [21 f.])

This passage is not found in the same connexion in the two evangelists, but there is no doubt that it stood in the source common to both. Luke attaches it to the return of the Seventy, and to their report of their success. 'In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit.' To Luke it is an utterance of pure joy—'uncompounded emotion.' It may be questioned whether this does justice to the words of Jesus. There is something more subtle in the placing of the words by Matthew, who also introduces them by 'at that time.' The time in Matthew is that at which Jesus has been sending His warning beatitude to John, passing a scornful censure on the childishness of his contemporaries in their dealings with God and His messengers, and pronouncing woes on the Galilæan cities which had seen His mighty works and not repented. 'At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and under-

standing, and didst reveal them unto babes. Yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight.' The eleventh chapter of Matthew as a whole might be headed *σκάνδαλον*, Offence: it is engaged throughout with people who found things in Jesus which they could not get over, and therefore with the disappointing side of His experience. It is a question of profound interest, how Jesus Himself regarded such disappointments, and the evangelist finds the answer to it in the first part of the great thanksgiving. When Jesus reflects on His work and its issues, disenchanting in some respects as they are, what is uppermost in His mind is recognition of God's fatherly providence, and unreserved and joyful surrender to it. The words 'revealed' and 'hidden' show that He is thinking mainly of His teaching. It is only the peculiarity of an Eastern language that makes Him seem to give thanks that some have rejected it: in our idiom He would have said, 'That while Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding, Thou hast revealed them unto babes.' Jesus could not have rejoiced in a revelation which was only accessible to the wise and understanding; this would have excluded the babes. But a revelation accessible to the babes is accessible to all; even the wise and understanding may apprehend it if they are willing to lay aside their pretensions and become as little children. Jesus is content, and more than content, to have it so. He acquiesces with joy in the ordering of His life and work upon such lines. It is the gracious will of the Father, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth; what should one who calls God Father do but accept it with serene confidence?

If the words of Jesus stopped here, we might not be able to bring them into any precise relation to our subject. They are such words as any child of God might use who encountered untoward experiences in doing the will of

his Father. But Jesus goes much further. The Godward ἐξομολόγησις or thanksgiving, the joyful acquiescence in the Father's will, is followed by a manward expression of assurance. The results of His work so far may seem disconcerting, but they do not cast Him down. He has an inward confidence that He is competent for the work the Father has given Him to do, and that He alone is competent. This is what is represented in the words of Matthew (11 [27]): All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. The variations in Luke are immaterial, and before referring to what many regard as an earlier tradition of this saying, substantially different in import, it will be worth while to consider what the received text means. The following points are to be noticed.

First, the declaration 'all things have been delivered unto me by My Father' is to be interpreted in relation to the context. 'All things' does not refer to universal sovereignty, as when Jesus after the resurrection says, All power has been given unto Me in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28 [18]). This is not relevant here, nor is there any analogy to it till Jesus is glorified. Neither does it express, as has been suggested, the Christian confidence declared in Paul's words, 'All things are yours' (1 Cor. 3 [21]), or, 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God' (Rom. 8 [28]). Standing where it does, 'all things' must mean all that is involved in the revelation of God to man—the whole contents and administration of this revelation. This is what is in view both in what precedes and in what follows. In the work of making Himself known to men, the Father has no organ but Jesus, and in Jesus He has an adequate

organ. The word παρεδόθη is supposed by many—Wellhausen among the latest—to allude to παράδοσις, or tradition, all religious knowledge among the Jews coming under this description. The tradition of the Jewish schools, on which the wise and understanding leaned so confidently, Jesus brushed aside; the tradition which He Himself represented was immediately due to God. It is plausible rather than convincing to deduce so much from the term παρεδόθη, but discounting the possible associations of the word, two things are clear. One is that Jesus strongly asserts here, as He is often represented doing in the fourth gospel, His subordination to the Father. He has nothing that He has not received. His doctrine is not His own, but His who sent Him. The other is that there is no limit to what He has received. The Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing (John 5 [20]).

The second point that calls for notice is the correlation of the Father and the Son. Both the words are used absolutely: as there is only one Person who can be called the Father, so there is only one who can be called the Son. The same phenomenon recurs in Mark 13 [32]: But of that day or hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. It is surely remarkable to find the credibility of this disputed. Schmiedel, indeed, whose treatment of the words before us will be considered presently, makes the passage in Mark one of the five foundation pillars for a purely historical account of Jesus, but Loisy is embarrassed by both.[1] 'Although Father and Son,' he writes, 'are not exclusively metaphysical terms'—in which case it would have been easy to discard them—'and although they here represent God and Christ, the use of the word Son *simpliciter* is extraordinary in the mouth of Jesus; it

[1] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. 909.

belongs to the language of tradition, not to that of the Saviour; the Christ it designates is immortal, we may even say eternal.' He refers in a note to the fact that the same use of Son is found again in Mark, but adds, 'there also one may think of a gloss of tradition, or of the evangelist.' Thought is free, and one may think of anything he likes, but surely it is arbitrary in the highest degree to set aside the testimony of our two oldest sources to what they evidently regarded as peculiarly solemn and important utterances of Jesus on the ground that the language they use belongs to tradition, not to the Saviour. What do we know of tradition, how can we form any idea at all of its language, except on the basis of the evidence which is here summarily set aside? Of course if one has made up his mind beforehand that no sane and pious person could ever speak of God and Himself as the Father and the Son, and that therefore such language could not have been used by Jesus, his way is clear; but it is clear also that he is measuring Jesus, and Jesus' consciousness of God and Himself, by antecedent convictions about men in general, and not by the evidence in our hands regarding this wonderful Man. If we knew nothing whatever about Jesus apart from this utterance it might well seem staggering, but we cannot forget as we read it all that we have already passed in review. The mind of Jesus on His own relations to God and to humanity is not, as we have seen abundant reason to believe, to be judged by that of other men; there is in it not only something which identifies Him with us, but something also, coming out in innumerable ways, which profoundly differentiates Him from us; and that mysterious something is conspicuous here. To sum up the whole passage, Matt. xi. [25-30], as Loisy does [1]—*Cantique de sagesse chrétienne*,

[1] *Ut supra*, p. 910.

fruit de l'Esprit—is to shut one's eyes to the Jesus who is visible throughout the gospels because one's mind is full of another Jesus who cannot be discovered in the gospels at all.

This unqualified correlation of the Father and the Son is the ultimate ground on which Jesus holds the place which He does in New Testament faith, and unless we can set aside the words in which He expresses it we must acknowledge that that place is justified. It is not only given, it is assumed. It answers to His own, as well as to the Christian, sense of what is due to Jesus: the Person on whom Christianity depends is in his own consciousness adequate to the responsibility.

Finally, however, this is brought out with new emphasis in the words which follow: 'No one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.' What stands on the very surface here is the mutual, perfect, and exclusive knowledge of the Father and the Son. When Jesus says that no one knows the Son but the Father, we cannot suppose Him to be merely saying of Himself what is true of every one, that there is a mystery in individuality which is open to God alone; assuming that He spoke the words at all, they are relevant and consistent with the context only if they suggest a unique and unfathomable greatness in Jesus. It is easier to see the point of what comes after: Neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. Jesus declares explicitly that He alone knows God as Father, and that for that knowledge, on which blessedness depends, all men must become debtors to Him. It is through Him alone, and in accordance with His sovereign and gracious will, that the Father is revealed, and that men can be enlightened

and saved. It is possible to read the passage as it stands in too abstract and metaphysical a sense—to forget that Father and Son, even when used thus absolutely, are terms full of ethical import; but it is a mistake to suppose that we do justice to an utterance so striking when we have reduced it to moral commonplace. No doubt we may say with Loisy, that no one fully knows the Son and the devotion that binds Him to man's redemption, except the Father who sends Him; and that no one knows the Father and the indulgent goodness with which He follows His creatures, except the Son and those who have been taught by Him; but as he himself allows (though he makes it an argument that it is not really Jesus who speaks), the terms Father and Son, in absolute correlation, as here, suggest something more. The sentence as a whole tells us plainly that Jesus is both to God and to man what no other can be: He is the Son who alone knows the Father—to borrow the expression of the fourth gospel, He is the υἱὸς μονογενής—and He is the Mediator through whom alone the knowledge of the Father comes to men. There is nothing in the New Testament which carries us further than this, and nothing more is wanted to justify completely the attitude of Christian faith to Jesus. It is a signal instance of a question-begging term when Loisy says that the passage *translates* the faith of the Christian community. It corresponds to it, yet does not translate it. But for words like these, and the reality which stands behind them, the faith of the Christian community could never have come into being, or been able to justify itself to its own judgment.

Criticism of this passage has seldom gone to the extreme represented by Loisy, who refuses to allow that it has any historical connexion with Jesus whatever. But in recent times an attempt has been made to dis-

count its importance by literary as opposed to historical considerations. It was apparently current in the second century in a somewhat different form. On the one hand, the present tense (ἐπιγινώσκει) was replaced by the aorist (ἔγνω); and on the other, the order of the clauses was reversed. It might then be rendered: No one has come to know the Father but the Son, nor has any one come to know the Son but the Father, and they (or he) to whomsoever the Son has made (or, willeth to make) the revelation.[1] The doctrinal importance of these changes is supposed to be very great, and has been strongly urged, for example, by Schmiedel.[2] The change of tense is alleged to bring the whole utterance down from the timeless or eternal into the historical world, and the affinity of this passage with the fourth gospel disappears. At the time at which Jesus speaks, He has attained to the knowledge that God is not a Lord inaccessible to men and always in a heat about His honour, but a loving Father. But Jesus is the only person who has yet attained to this insight. Having it, it is natural for Him to think of Himself as God's Son, and so He does think of Himself; but none of His hearers has penetrated His secret. God alone knows, or rather has perceived—because the spiritual history of Jesus has given Him the opportunity of perceiving

[1] This is the 'Western' reading as given *e.g.* in Huck's *Synopse* on the basis of Marcion, Justin, and the Clementine Homilies: *οὐδεὶς ἔγνω τὸν πατέρα, εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱός, καὶ (οὐδὲ) τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατὴρ καὶ οἷς (ᾧ) ἂν ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψῃ (βουληται ἀποκαλύψαι)*. Harnack in his attempted restoration of Q (*Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 94, 189 ff.) adopts the change of tense, but not that of order. He is inclined to agree with Wellhausen that the clause 'no one knows the Son but the Father' is an old interpolation: the variation of position itself makes it suspicious, and as we have seen above its relevance is not so obvious. Harnack's text runs: *πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω [τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατὴρ οὐδὲ] τὸν πατέρα [τις ἔγνω] εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι*. For Weiss's view, which is more favourable to the received text, v. *Die Quellen der synopt. Ueberl.* 30.

[2] *Das vierte Evangelium*, 48 ff.

—that Jesus' attitude to Him is that of son to father. The change of order, too, is important. In the received text, what immediately precedes the last clause is the assertion that no one knows the Father but the Son, and when it is added, 'and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal,' the object naturally supplied is 'the Father,' or 'the true nature of God.' But in the more ancient text, what immediately precedes the last clause is, No one knows the Son but the Father, and to this the natural supplement can only be, 'and they (or he) to whom the Son reveals Himself.' It is as if Jesus had said to His hearers, 'None of you has yet recognised me: I have to tell you Myself what I am.' It is not the Father whom He reveals, but the Son.

The importance of this, allowing to the 'Western' text any authority it can legitimately claim, is much more apparent than real. To refer first to the difference of order: it is certain that every one who often quotes this utterance of Jesus quotes it with the clauses sometimes in one order, sometimes in the other. Irenæus, who censures those who adopt the 'Western' order as people who want to be wiser than the apostles, sometimes follows it himself; which proves, not that it stood in his New Testament, but that, like other people in ancient and modern times, Irenæus could recall the passage without attaching any significance to the order.[1] Then as to the tense: is it quite certain that there is the difference which Schmiedel supposes between the aorist and the present? Even those who read ἔγνω in their text must have felt that it included a present—a historical if not a timeless one; at the moment at which the words were spoken Jesus and the Father had the peculiar, mutual, and exclusive knowledge of each other which is asserted also in the received text. If this is so,

[1] Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.*, iv. 6. 2.

nothing is gained for Schmiedel's interpretation by saying that what Jesus revealed was not the Father but Himself. He Himself was Son, and as the knowledge of relatives is one, to reveal Himself is to reveal the Father. It is difficult to understand why a writer who not only accepts as certain, but presents as the very type of certainty, the passage in Mark 13^{32} in which there is an absolute correlation of the Father and the Son, should so strenuously object to it here, and argue that Jesus cannot have called Himself Son of God in a sense applicable to Himself alone. If He did it there, why not here? To avoid all misunderstanding, Schmiedel says, we must state as the import of the passage not that Jesus was conscious of Himself as the Son of God, but that He was conscious of Himself as a child of God. That is, we must decline the only expression which is known to the New Testament, and adopt an expression of which the New Testament does not furnish a single example. We must set the whole of the evidence aside, and construct the consciousness of Jesus out of our own heads. It is impossible to regard this as serious criticism.

There is one consideration which of itself is conclusive against all minimising constructions of this passage. It is contained in the words, All things have been delivered unto Me by My Father. (Harnack thinks the original was 'by the Father'; but it makes no difference.) These words are surely not the preface to such a rationalistic commonplace as Schmiedel evolves from what comes after; they imply in Jesus a consciousness of His place and vocation to which nothing but the Christian attitude to Him does justice. It is vain to isolate words like these about the Father and the Son, and then to torture them into agreement with some preconceived idea of what Jesus must have been: they do not stand alone in our evidence, and when we take

them with utterances of Jesus such as have been already examined they refuse to accept any but the highest interpretation. There may be theories of man and the universe which have antecedent antipathies to them; but it is no objection to them, in the eyes of a student of history, that they furnish a historical justification for the Christian faith in Jesus. It may not be amiss, however, to remark that while we accept this justification, we admit that it is idle to ask whether the Sonship of Jesus here spoken of is Messianic or ethical or metaphysical. We gain nothing by separating in thought what cannot be separated in reality. That Jesus was conscious of a unique vocation in connexion with God's Kingdom is true: in that sense He was the Messianic Son of God, and the passage illustrates His Messianic consciousness. But the relation to God which this involved was not 'official'; even in His Messianic vocation His consciousness was filial; the God whose kingdom He was to inaugurate was His Father in a vital and ethical sense—One with whom He lived in perfect mutual understanding, who was loved and trusted by Him without reserve, and to whom He could say in the most disconcerting situations, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight. The least serviceable, however, of all these distinctions is metaphysical. It means something when we say that Jesus was Messianic Son of God—we can put into the adjective all we know of His vocation in God's Kingdom. It means something when we say He was Son of God in the ethical sense: we can fill up the idea of Sonship with the love, trust, and obedience which belong to the filial life. But it does not mean anything which we can correspondingly define if we say He was Son in the metaphysical sense. It is only another way of saying with emphasis that He *was* Son, and of suggesting that

there was something in His Sonship which goes beyond us.

Isolated Expressions in which Jesus' Consciousness of Himself is Revealed

Up till now we have examined passages common to Matthew and Luke in which there was a certain continuity, but it is necessary to look at others in which, though fragmentary and isolated, there is a similar revelation of the mind of Jesus. It is impossible to take them in any chronological order, but the following are the most important.

In Matt. 11 [20-24], Luke 10 [13-15] we have the woes pronounced by Jesus on Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. The mighty works He has done in them are referred to—miracles of healing, evidently, in which the goodness of God was leading them to repentance—and the doom of their impenitence is pronounced. It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, more tolerable for Sodom, in the day of judgment than for them. The work of Jesus is connected in His own mind with the last day. Nothing less than the final destiny of men is determined by their attitude to it. This sense of the absolute significance of the manifestation of God's saving power in Him pervades many of the words of Jesus, and is the ultimate basis of what is called faith in His divinity.

Another significant passage is Matt. 12 [30], which is found *verbatim* also in Luke 11 [23]: He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth. This is on the same plane, even if it is not in the same key, as 'he that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.' It betrays the consciousness in Jesus of a significance attaching to His

own personality and work such as has no parallel in Scripture. What, in His own mind, is the Person who thus summons men to identify themselves with Him, and declares neutrality impossible? Every one feels how weighty His words are if they really express the mind of Jesus about Himself, and though for those who remember other sayings of Jesus with which we are now familiar there is no reason to question them, we need not be surprised to find that they have been assailed from various sides. Wellhausen[1] thinks that, to be relevant to the context—that is, to fit into their place in the argument—they must be capable of being generalised. Jesus is only taking Himself as an example of a principle: He says, He who is not with Me is against Me, but He is not specially thinking of Himself; what He means is that in any battle he who is not a friend is a foe. How any one can say this of a passage in which the standing of Jesus is the very point at issue (notice the repeated and emphatic ἐγώ in Matt. 12 [27-28] which immediately precedes, and the saying about speaking against the Son of Man in Matt. 12 [32] which immediately follows) it is hard to comprehend. Loisy[2] does not attempt to eviscerate the words, but suggests that they do not come from Jesus. He points to the fact that in Mark 9 [40] and Luke 9 [50] we have a saying in a somewhat similar situation—in both places exorcism is being discussed—but of a different spirit, though an analogous form. In Luke it reads, He that is not against you is on your side; in Mark, according to the generally accepted text, though Wellhausen would make it agree with Luke, He who is not against us is on our side. This is more genial, more tolerant, than the saying in Matt. 12 [30], Luke 11 [23], and therefore may be

[1] *Das Evangelium Matthaei*, ad loc.
[2] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. 708.

assumed to be a word of Jesus. Loisy assumes that it is the only word of Jesus on the subject, but the writer must confess himself quite unable to follow the process by which a *rédacteur* is conjured up *qui aurait cru devoir retourner la sentence: 'Qui n'est pas contre vous est pour vous,' en: 'Qui n'est pas avec moi est contre moi.' Aurait cru devoir* is good, but it does not justify M. Loisy in laying on the conscience of an imaginary *rédacteur* the responsibility of producing the reasons which he himself owes to his readers. There is in fact no reason whatever for this fantastic supposition, except the reason that Jesus must not say things which indicate that He had in His own mind the absolute significance which He has in Christian faith. The two sayings are quite independent—Luke, as we have seen, gives both —and they are strictly relevant to the context in which they occur. In Matt. 12 [30], Luke 11 [23] Jesus is discussing exorcism with His enemies, who wish to arrest His beneficent work, and He says naturally, in the tone of warning, He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth. In Mark 9 [40], Luke 9 [50] He is discussing the same subject with His disciples, one of whom has just told Him that he had seen a man casting out devils in Jesus' name and forbidden him, because he did not follow with them. Just as naturally Jesus answers here, Forbid him not: he who is not against you is on your side. There is no reason to doubt either the one saying or the other, and both belong to the oldest stratum of evangelic tradition.

The twelfth chapter of Matthew preserves other words of Jesus in which we hear Him speak of His own greatness. Two of these (in verses 41, 42) are found also in Luke (11 [31 f.]): Behold, there is *more* than Jonah here; Behold, there is *more* than Solomon here. A third occurs in Matthew only (v. 6): I say unto you,

there is *something greater* than the temple here. In all these passages the words underlined are neuter: Jesus does not say directly, I am greater than the temple or Jonah or Solomon, but He declares that where He is a greater cause is represented, greater responsibilities are imposed, greater issues are at stake, than were involved by relation to the most sacred institutions or the most venerated personalities of former times. It is not necessary to ask how Jesus conceived the temple or Jonah or Solomon to be transcended in importance by Himself: the significant fact is that He did. It is in the same consciousness, though in a different tone, that He speaks in another passage preserved both in Matthew and Luke, and therefore going back to their source, though they give it in different connections: 'Happy are *your* eyes, for they see, and (your) ears, for they hear. (For verily) I say unto you that many prophets (and kings) desired to see what you see and saw not, and to hear what you hear and heard not.'[1] The revelation made in Jesus not only brings great responsibilities, but rare blessedness. The look which Jesus here casts upon the past is one of the most vivid and beautiful things in the New Testament. He enters sympathetically into the yearnings of good men in distant ages, into the hopes that their eyes grew dim with waiting for; and He is conscious that their long-deferred fulfilment has come at last with Him. Matthew inserts the words just after the first parable of Jesus, or rather after the quotation from Isaiah, in which the judicial blindness of the unbelieving people is foretold: in Luke they stand in immediate connexion with the claim of Jesus to be the Son who alone knows and can alone reveal the Father. In any case, they discover the consciousness of Jesus

[1] This is Harnack's reconstruction of the passage: *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 94.

that in Him the absolute revelation has come: those who know Him have the happiness which can never be transcended. All the hopes and longings of the good are consummated in it. He does not say, Blessed are *our* eyes, for they see, and *our* ears, for they hear, as if the blessedness were that of a new era in which He shared only as His contemporaries did; but blessed are *your* eyes and *your* ears; for what they saw and heard was seen and heard in Him. It is He Himself—His presence in the world, and the revelation of God He makes in word and deed—which is the ground of His felicitation of the disciples. And this, be it remarked once more, is only another way in which He assumes that the proper attitude of men to Himself is that which is everywhere exhibited in the New Testament Church. He has a place which is all His own as the Mediator of the supreme blessedness for men, and to deny Him such a place is not only to subvert historical Christianity, it is to ignore Jesus' presentation of Himself.

We may now proceed to consider another passage which certainly stood in the source common to Matthew and Luke, and possibly even in that source was a quotation, a passage therefore of high antiquity, yet in many respects hard to estimate. In Matthew it is given continuously in ch. 23^{34-39}, and forms the climax of the great denunciation of the Pharisees with which Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem closes; in Luke it occurs much earlier, and is broken into two. The first part (ch. 11^{49-51}), as in Matthew, closes a series of woes pronounced upon the Pharisees, though the scene is not the temple, but a Pharisee's table somewhere in Galilee or Peræa; the second (ch. $13^{34\,f.}$) is connected with the saying of Jesus that it is not possible that a prophet should perish out of Jerusalem, but is not spoken in the capital nor at the close of Jesus' ministry. More

remarkable even than differences like these, to which the gospels present many parallels, is the manner in which Luke introduces the words of Jesus: 'Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, I will send unto them prophets and apostles,' etc. There are only two things that can be said of this. Either the evangelist, for no reason we can see, identifies Jesus at this point with the Wisdom of God, and then goes on to report the words which Jesus spoke in this character; or Jesus Himself quotes from some book of Wisdom which has been lost to us, making (as the evangelist understood) the words of the Wisdom of God His own. To this we can certainly provide no parallel, yet we may not be justified in pronouncing it impossible. It is plausible, indeed, to argue with Loisy and others that Matthew is right in giving the passage unbroken, and Luke in representing it as a citation. The point of view is that of an apocalyptic writer, surveying God's providential dealings with Israel, and like all his kind renouncing hope. God has done everything to win them, appealed to them by messengers of every type—prophets, wise men, scribes; but from the beginning of the story to the end, from Genesis to Revelation in the Hebrew Bible,[1] the stream of righteous blood has never ceased to flow;[2] the Wisdom of God has been scorned and trampled on in all its representatives. At last the hour of vengeance is at hand, but ere it strikes, the heart of Wisdom and

[1] The writer sees no need to depart from the old opinion that 'from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah (the son of Barachiah)' is a way of saying 'from the beginning of history to the end'; the reference in the case of Zachariah being to 2 Chron. $24^{20\,f.}$ —2 Chron. is the last book in the Hebrew canon. It is not certain that 'son of Barachiah' belonged originally to the text (it is wanting in Luke); but even if it did, it would only be a slip of a perfectly natural kind. As Loisy remarks, it is not easy to see what reason a Christian could have for putting the murder of Zachariah the son of Baruch by the Zealots at the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem on a level with that of Abel.

[2] See Matt. 23^{35}, *ἐκχυννόμενον*.

of God, is revealed in the thrilling apostrophe, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not.' This is not (it is argued) the voice of Jesus, referring to such visits to Jerusalem and to such attempts to win her people as we see in the fourth gospel: it is the voice of God; Jerusalem, in this high poetic key, is not material—the geographical city in which Jesus was crucified; she is the impersonation of Israel, the mother of the children to whom God appeals. All this may be granted—perhaps we should rather say, All this must be granted—yet the question remains, Is it incredible that the application of it to Jesus should have been due to Himself? It is not necessary to enter into the minor changes by which the evangelists adapt the tradition to their audience—Luke, for example, replacing the Jewish 'wise men and scribes' of Matthew by Christian 'apostles'—the two main points are the same in both. These are that Jesus identifies Himself with all God's action towards Israel, finding it continued and indeed consummated in Himself, and that He declares the doom of Israel to be involved in the rejection of Himself and His messengers. Now it is not too much to say that these are constant elements in Jesus' consciousness of Himself and of His significance; the last, in particular, has come before us again and again (*v.* Matt. 10 [15], 11 [20 ff.]), while the first is involved in the simple conception of Himself as the Messiah, the person through whom God's purpose towards Israel is to be accomplished. All that remains then is the question, which is rather of curious than of serious interest, whether Jesus would have borrowed from a book to express elements of His consciousness so moving and profound. Assuming that a book is

quoted, it also must have been moving and profound —wonderfully and divinely inspired in its apprehension of God's relations to Israel. Nothing but the spirit of Christ in the writer (1 Peter 1 [11]) could enable him to enter with such profound sympathy into God's dealings with Israel, and so to speak of them in words which Jesus could afterwards make His own. Is it not gratuitous to suppose that the authority lying behind Matthew and Luke—an authority which we have good reason to believe to be that of the apostle Matthew himself—put these words into the mouth of Jesus without ground? If they were incongruous with what we have already seen to be the mind of Jesus about Himself, we might accept this supposition to explain the incongruity; but when there is no inherent difficulty—when the self-revelation of Jesus here is in thorough harmony with that which we have already seen, on the basis of Matt. x. and xi., with their parallels in Luke, to be truly historical—the supposition is at least not inevitable. It is easier to believe that whatever the circumstances—whether in Galilee or in Jerusalem, whether with His death imminent or at a greater distance from it—Jesus took these wonderful words to Himself. They open to us the mind in which He lived and died. The presence in the world of a Person who was able to appropriate such words—to identify so absolutely the actions and the cause of God with His own cause and actions—is not confined to this passage; it is, as we have amply seen, the signature of the gospels as a whole. It is the token that we have passed from the Old Testament to the New, and that the New is founded not only on the faith of Christians but on the mind of Christ.[1]

[1] The striking remark of Harnack on the discourse about the Baptist in Matt. xi. (*Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 167) is not inappropriate here: Dass aber der ganzen Rede das 'Ich bin es' zugrunde liegt, ist kein Grund zu Bedenken, oder man muss den Federstrich über ganzen Inhalt der Evan-

Passages in which Jesus speaks of Himself as The Son of Man

In view of the doubt which has been cast on the use of this title by Jesus at all, it is worth while to refer to its distribution in the pages of the gospels. As Dr. Armitage Robinson has pointed out,[1] it occurs in every one of the *strata* of the evangelic records which criticism has learned to distinguish. It is found in Mark, in the non-Marcan source common to Matthew and Luke with which we are at present concerned, in passages peculiar to Matthew and to Luke respectively, and in John. Be the difficulties what they may, if anything can be established by testimony, it is established that Jesus used this phrase as a designation of Himself. It was indeed so characteristic of Him that no one, apparently, could give any account of how He spoke without making use of it. When we look more closely at the facts, however, it has to be admitted that the testimony as to the occasions on which it was used is not quite uniform. For instance, in the document with which we are dealing, it is sometimes not quite clear whether its presence is due to Jesus or to the evangelist. In Luke 6^{22} we have a beatitude on those who suffer 'for the Son of Man's sake,' where the parallel in Matt. 5^{12} has 'for My sake'; and similarly in Luke 12^{8} we have 'him will the Son of Man confess,' where Matt. 10^{32} gives 'him will I confess.' Such disagreements, however, are the exception. In the vast majority of cases, where one evangelist has 'the Son of Man,' so has the other; and in view of this fact it seems an overstatement to say with Harnack, that while it is certain that Jesus used

gelien ziehen. The admission of this sound principle would draw the pen through an immense mass of what is regarded as historical criticism of the gospels.

[1] *The Study of the Gospels*, p. 49.

this title we cannot be certain that He used it on any given occasion.[1] The title is a significant one; and if there are occasions on which an utterance of Jesus depends for its point on this significance, and on which the use of the title is attested both by Matthew and Luke, and therefore by their source, we may surely say that on these occasions we have a certainty of it as well assured as anything can be in history. An attempt has been made to discredit the joint testimony of Matthew and Luke to some striking instances of the use of this title by arguing that it is in the strictest sense Messianic, and that Jesus could not possibly have made public and frequent use of it when His Messiahship was not only not proclaimed by Himself, but not even suspected by His most intimate disciples. It is pointed out, too, in this connexion, that in Mark, with the exception of two instances which are susceptible of easy explanation as due to misapprehension by the evangelist (Mark $2^{10\text{-}28}$), the title is not used till after Jesus has been confessed as the Christ at Caesarea Philippi; and that when it is used subsequently to this it is in the specifically eschatological sense. That is, it designates Jesus not as actually the Messiah, which would be a contradiction in terms, no actual king being possible till the Kingdom had actually come; but as the Person who is to be the Messiah, and who will come in that character with the coming of the Kingdom.

The evidence of Mark will be considered at a later stage, but the highly problematical treatment of Mark $2^{10\text{-}28}$, and the inferences drawn from it, are entirely insufficient to invalidate the witness of an authority which is at least as ancient as Mark, and had as wide a currency in the Church. We must not be too hasty and too precise in defining 'the Son of Man,' especially if

[1] *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 169.

the result is that many of the most moving and characteristic sayings of the gospel are obliterated, while those alone are left which perplex or embarrass the ordinary mind. The title, no doubt, goes back primarily to Dan. 7^{13}. There, however, it is not a title, but an appellative; not a proper name without meaning, but a term with essential significance of its own. What the seer beholds is not the Son of Man, but one like a son of man—that is, a human form, as opposed to the brute forms of the earlier visions. That this human form has 'the Kingdom' given to it—that it is invested with a final, universal, and glorious sovereignty—is true; in that sense the vision is eschatological. This, too, facilitated and made appropriate in the New Testament the use of the title Son of Man in eschatological connexions. But that on which the main emphasis lies in Daniel is the humanity of the form which is invested with this eschatological splendour, and though an apocalyptist might overlook this, it was not likely to be overlooked by Jesus. We do not need to trace the process by which the human figure of Daniel's vision, which originally stood for Israel, 'the saints of the Most High' (Dan. 7^{18}), was identified with the Messiah, Israel's ideal representative; but we can be sure that in appropriating the title to Himself, Jesus did not lose the consciousness of what originally gave it its meaning. It was always charged with the idea of humanity, as well as with that of final sovereignty, or apocalyptic splendour. The most technical expression would fill with finer import in the lips of Jesus, and admitting the Messianic and eschatological import of this title as it was currently used, we see no reason to question that Jesus may have employed it on occasion with an emphasis which brought out another part of its contents. It is the more natural to think so when we observe that the later New Testament writers

who indicate acquaintance with it, though they do not themselves use it—Paul in 1 Cor. $15^{27\,f.}$ and the Epistle to the Hebrews $2^{6\,ff.}$—connect it not with Daniel but with the Eighth Psalm. Here Man in His greatness and littleness is the Psalmist's subject, and the fortunes of humanity, as represented by Jesus, are what engage the minds of the Christian authors.

To turn, then, to the texts common to Matthew and Luke, we find first, following Luke's order, that in which Jesus contrasts Himself with the Baptist (Luke $7^{31\,ff.}$, Matt. $11^{16\,ff.}$). It occurs incidentally in the vivid little parable in which Jesus pronounces His verdict on His contemporaries, comparing them, in all their relations to God, to wilful children, who will not be in earnest with religion in any form, sombre or winsome. 'John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say He has a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.' It is not easy to understand why Harnack thinks it 'more than doubtful' that Jesus used this title here. He says that in the discourse which precedes and of which this forms part, Jesus has clearly enough avoided any designation of Himself as Messiah; but He shows convincingly that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus pervades this speech from beginning to end. He does not regard this as unhistorical,[1] but if its historicity be admitted, why should we hesitate to think that the Messianic consciousness might reveal itself in a significant or suggestive term? It is true that Jesus did not at this period call Himself the Christ, and that even after the confession at Caesarea Philippi, He forbade His disciples to tell any one that He was so; but for this there were reasons. The Christ or the Messiah was a term which for the Jews was laden

[1] *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 167, quoted above in note on p. 254.

with political meanings and hopes in which Jesus had no part; He deliberately avoided using it therefore, because to use it was to excite expectations which it was His very calling to disown. But that is no reason why He should not have employed another title to express His unique relation to the Kingdom of God, if such a title could be found; a title which was at once free from the objectionable political associations of 'the Christ,' and singularly appropriate to convey some of the most characteristic thoughts of Jesus. The title Son of Man lay to His hand. It implied at once humanity and sovereignty, but while both of these ideas are essential elements in the meaning, either might be uppermost, while the other was more or less latent. In the passage before us, it is the humanity which is emphasised. The Baptist had seemed to separate himself from men—to rise, in a sense, above the measure of common humanity. He would not be in debt to it for anything, neither society nor food nor clothing. He was an exalted, austere, and solitary being; when common sense ceased to be frightened by his preaching, it said 'he is possessed by a demon—mad.' But the person whose transcendent greatness as compared with John is the presupposition of the whole discourse comes in quite another fashion. He is not too good to take the world as God has made it, to enter into the common life of men, to meet them, so to speak, on their own level. He comes 'eating and drinking.' Humanity is the very badge and device under which he lives. This is what the title particularly expresses, and surely a title or descriptive designation is wanted. To put 'I' into the sentence instead of 'the Son of Man,' is to rob it of its point and beauty. But something is lost also if we ignore the latent sense of sovereignty which is always an element in the meaning. To render the words as

O. Holtzmann does,[1] *Es kam das Menschenkind,* is to fail utterly to do justice to the 'I am he,' which as Harnack says underlies the passage throughout. Its interest, in relation to the purpose of this study, is that it reveals Jesus to us making (if we may put it so) in the most unassuming manner the most stupendous assumption—identifying Himself with men in all that is human, sharing with them in the humble common order of their life in this world, yet representing for them at that level the supreme wisdom of God, and betraying the sense that the final triumph of humanity—that victory of the human over the brutal in which the Kingdom of God is announced to come—is a triumph identical with his own. It is not only in what have been regarded as properly eschatological passages that we have to think of this last aspect of the Son of Man: more or less it must reach the mind everywhere. Only because the final sovereignty and all that it involves is latent in the term can he who says with such genial humility, The Son of Man came eating and drinking, say at the same time, Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me, or Whoso shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man confess before the angels of God.

The second of our examples is found *verbatim* in Matt. 8^{20}, Luke 9^{58}: The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. This is surely a self-authenticating word. To replace the Son of Man by the personal pronoun is to take the weight as well as the beauty of the saying away. Jesus does not speak to repel the person—a scribe, according to Matthew—who offered to follow Him wherever He went, but He invites him to count the cost. He does not speak as if such devotion were beyond what He could claim; on the contrary, the

[1] In his *Leben Jesu*, p. 129.

immediate context in both evangelists represents Him as demanding from an aspirant to discipleship that cruel sacrifice of natural affection which we have already discussed in principle: Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead. His claims cannot be put too high. What breaks through at this point in the use of the title Son of Man—a title so appropriate where Jesus finds that His humanity is literally all that He has in common with His kind, all properties and privileges of other men being denied Him—is this sense of the disparity between His present lot and that which is destined for Him. The pathos of His situation is not that of a poor man, but that of a disinherited King. He is the heir of all things, and when He calls Himself the Son of Man, He betrays that He thinks of Himself in that character; but He sees not yet all things put under Him. How much of the sense of this reached the mind of His hearers—how far, for example, the scribe here addressed felt that the coming King had an infinitely stronger claim on the loyalty of his followers just because He was homeless as yet in the realm which was truly His own—we may not be able to tell. Sometimes a man, even in speaking to others, speaks half to himself, utters his mind heedless of whether it can all be apprehended or appreciated at the moment, because he is sure it will be afterwards. No one who heard this word could forget it. There is no reason to suppose that the authority on which Matthew and Luke are dependent made any mistake in recording it; and its whole meaning and power would be disclosed as other sides of what 'the Son of Man' meant were revealed in the teaching of Jesus.

Passing by the occurrence of the phrase in Matt. 12 [40], where we have an interpretation by the evangelist of a word of Jesus which is simply reported in Luke 11 [30], we come to the last case in which it is used by both Matthew

and Luke, a case of peculiar difficulty: Matt. 12 [32], Luke 12 [10]. Here blaspheming or speaking a word against the Son of Man is contrasted, as a pardonable sin, with blaspheming the Spirit, which is unpardonable. Such a contrast is only intelligible if the Son of Man is a person who suggests in the first instance the human rather than the divine, a person therefore with regard to whom misapprehension, contempt, and petulance are easy to understand and to condone. On the other hand, it is obvious that the title Son of Man must be significant here, and significant of something great: if it were merely a synonym for 'I,' and if the speaker were only an ordinary person like those to whom He spoke, what He says would be gratuitous and even profane. Who am 'I,' to say that whoever speaks a word against me it shall be forgiven him, and to compare, or if it be preferred, to contrast speaking against myself with speaking against the Holy Spirit? Even to contrast two things implies some sort of proportion between them, and it is inept to say that a sin is pardonable, unless there is a natural presumption that it is in itself a grave sin. This is the situation here. Jesus calls himself the Son of Man with the sense of what the term involves. The Son of Man is the destined King in the Kingdom of God, the glorious person who is to hold the sovereignty when the tyranny of Satan has been overthrown. It is this which makes speaking against Him alarming. In spite of His destined glory, however, He moves among men in a lowly guise and in familiar relations which expose Him to hasty and unworthy censures. It is such a censure that we find in the petulant outburst, 'He is beside himself'; but offensive as it is, the circumstances make it pardonable. Nevertheless, in the very fact that Jesus pronounces it to be pardonable, and that He names it in the same breath with the sin against the Spirit, which

He declares to be unpardonable, we see how seriously He regarded it, and how singularly therefore He thought of Himself. In its combination of self-abnegation and self-assertion, the passage is exactly parallel to that in which Jesus disclaims knowledge of 'that day or that hour,' while at the same time He assumes a place higher than men or angels, the place of One who is 'the Son' in the unqualified sense in which God is 'the Father' (Mark 13 [32]). Schmiedel is probably right in holding that this saying about the pardonableness of speaking a word against the Son of Man is a genuine word of Jesus: it is certainly not likely to have been invented by people who worshipped Him. But even if he were wrong, and Wellhausen were right in his belief that the true form of Jesus' words is preserved in Mark, the result, so far as our argument is concerned, would hardly be affected. In Mark (3 [28 ff.]), there is no mention of the Son of Man, but all sins are said to be pardonable to the sons of men except that of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Now the sin of blaspheming the Spirit, as the context shows, is the sin of those who look at the works of redeeming love wrought by the Spirit of God in Jesus—for it is by the Spirit of God he casts out demons—and ascribe them to Beelzebub. In other words, it is by a sin committed against the person and work of Jesus that men involve themselves in unpardonable guilt. This puts Him even more unequivocally than the form of words common to Matthew and Luke into a place of peculiar greatness. It identifies Him with the cause of God in that absolute fashion of which we have already had illustrations, and it makes the destiny of men depend for ever on their attitude to Himself and His work.[1]

In the passages which have just been reviewed what is uppermost in the title Son of Man is the suggestion of

[1] On this paragraph, see the author's article in *The Expositor*, Dec. 1907.

humanity—the lowliness of Jesus, His kinship with men, that in His aspect and circumstances which exposes Him to depreciation and misunderstanding. The other side of the meaning—that in which the glorious destiny of the Son of Man is involved—can never have been absent, though in these cases it is more or less latent. Matthew and Luke have, however, in common another series of passages in which the glorious destiny of the Son of Man is the very thing which is affirmed. They are to be found in Matt. $24^{27, 37, 39, 44}$; Luke $17^{24, 26, 30}$, 12^{40}. To these we should perhaps add Luke 12^{8}, though in the parallel in Matt. 10^{32} the Son of Man is wanting, and is represented by 'I.' In all these passages the eschatological meaning is undoubted: Jesus speaks of Himself definitely as the person in whom the glorious prophecy of Dan. $7^{13\ ff.}$ is to be suddenly and finally fulfilled. Hence there can be no question that Jesus Himself inspired the hope of His Return which fills the New Testament. If He renounced Messiahship in the political sense in which it was popular with the Jews, He claimed it in the supernatural sense which had gathered around it since Daniel. He identified Himself with the human form to which 'the kingdom' was to be given. Nothing isolates more conspicuously Jesus' sense of what He was in relation to God and to man. Nothing marks off His consciousness of Himself more distinctly from every form of prophetic consciousness than this, that whereas the prophets looked forward to the coming of another, what Jesus saw as the final and glorious consummation of God's purposes was His own coming again. It is not to the purpose to raise here the question how far the words of Jesus are to be taken literally, or how far they are merely symbolical—how far they have proved substantially true, or how far we must acknowledge in them that illusive element which is inseparable from predictive prophecy. When we consider

that everything else in the seventh chapter of Daniel is symbolic—the sea, for example, and the brutal monsters which arise out of it—it is at least plausible to argue that much of what is spectacular in Jesus' words about the sudden and glorious advent of the Son of Man is symbolical also. We are as likely to misunderstand Him if we read in a legal or prosaic spirit, pressing the literal meaning of every term, as if we exaggerate the symbol till no palpable fact remains. But whatever the true method of interpretation may be, it cannot be questioned that in His own mind Jesus was identified with that mysterious and transcendent Person through whom the kingdom of God at last comes in glory. If we knew nothing of Jesus but this, it might well seem disconcerting: He could be represented with much plausibility as the victim of a fanatical delusion. But the mind of Jesus about Himself, in relation to God and to the establishment of His kingdom, has already come before us in a great variety of aspects, and forbids any such conclusion. That mind, it is not too much to say, is throughout consistent with itself, and in harmony with the place claimed by Jesus in the prophecies of His glorious Coming. It is not fanatical, and there is no shadow of unreality about it; the unique place He assumes, the unique authority He claims to exercise, vindicate themselves in the mind and conscience of man. It is not only in its glorious consummation that the kingdom is identified with Him; it is identified with Him all through His career. The attitude which He requires of men is involved in this fact, and it is always the same. When He speaks of His Advent in glory and of the manner in which the destiny of men is then decided for ever by their relation to Himself, He only concentrates into one tremendous expression what is the burden of His self-revelation from beginning to end.

So far as it has been carried, the results of our investi-

gation are, we venture to assert, entirely favourable to the catholic Christian attitude to Jesus. The investigation has been strictly limited to the oldest accessible authorities —the source common to Matthew and Luke, with one or two references at the outset to Mark; and the conclusion is all the more important. We do not say that it vindicates any particular Christology—Arian, Athanasian, or Kenotic; or even any of the Christological types represented in the apostolic writings. But it does what is infinitely more important. It demonstrates—the word is not too strong—that Jesus was not, in His own consciousness of Himself, merely one man more in the world, though one who (as it happened) knew God better than others; He was not simply a prophet like those who had gone before; He was not a Jew who like all other Jews saw the will of God in the Old Testament, but believed Himself to possess a better way of doing it than the other teachers of the time; He was not 'the ideal religious subject,' the inspiring pattern of man's true attitude to God. He was more than all this, and in some respects very different from all this. 'The whole literature,' we may say—borrowing for application to the earliest evangelic records what Professor Cairns has observed of the New Testament in general—'the whole literature is inspired by the conviction, not simply that something new has been discovered, but that something new has *happened.*'[1] When Christ is in the world it is another world; there is a Person in it to whom our attitude must be other than it is to men in general, just because He is and reveals Himself to be other. 'Men there have been who felt themselves able to say "*I know*," and who died like Him for their convictions. But He was able to say "*I am.*" I am that to which prophecy has pointed, and was able to feel Himself worthy to be that.'[2]

[1] *Christianity in the Modern World*, p. 147.
[2] G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, ii. p. 548.

This is indeed the vital point of difference between the Old Testament and the New, the foundation on which alone Christianity can rest as a faith specifically distinct from that of the Old Testament. It is so far from being the truth that the Son has no place in the gospel as it was preached by Jesus, that the gospel, even as preached by Jesus, is constituted by the presence of the Son in the world, and the place given to Him in religion. There is no Christianity except through a particular attitude of the soul to Jesus, and that attitude of the soul to Jesus is demanded at every point, in every relation, and in every mode, tacit and explicit, by Jesus Himself. Christianity is what it is through the presence in it of the Mediator, and it is not only in the faith of Christians but in the mind of Jesus Himself that the character of Mediator is claimed. It is a character, happily, which can be recognised without raising either physical questions, or metaphysical—without asking, not to speak of answering, the questions to which the creed makers and the authors of Christologies have devoted their powers; but to recognise it means that Jesus becomes the object of our faith. We trust in Him, commit ourselves to Him, believe in God through Him, and are conscious when we do so that we have reached the final truth of things.

Up to this point, we have examined mainly discourses of Jesus as recorded in Q, and have based our argument on the words of Jesus Himself. But while speech is in some ways the most adequate expression of mind, a man may reveal what he is, and what he conceives himself to be, by action, which is more speaking even than words. It has already been noticed that the second of the early witnesses to Jesus—the Gospel according to Mark—contains few discourses of Jesus: it is a picture of His life rather than a record of His words. It is, however, a very early picture, and there can be no doubt that it circulated

in the Christian churches, whether in documentary form, or through the labours of catechists, contemporaneously with the source we have already scrutinised. Whether there was any closer connexion between the two it is perhaps impossible to tell. Scholars have come to no convincing conclusion. Wellhausen thinks Mark the earlier, and that where the other source departs from Mark we see traces of the progressive Christianising of the record—that is, of its lapsing from the mind of Jesus, who was not a Christian but a Jew, to the mind of the later church about Jesus; Weiss, after the studies of a lifetime, persists in the belief that Mark is the later of the two, and in many essential respects was dependent on the other.[1] Whether the theory of successive editions of Mark would enable criticism to find a way of reconciling these contrary opinions is a doubtful question, but hardly of importance in this connexion. To all intents and purposes, except those of literary criticism, Mark and Q are contemporary witnesses to Jesus: each of them tells us what was believed about Him in the church not far from A.D. 70, and the only thing that is of interest is whether or not they concur in their testimony. This will appear as we proceed.

Mark opens with a title or superscription which cannot be ignored: 'the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God.' As these words show, he has a conception of Jesus and of the meaning of His life, death and resurrection; and it is in the light of this conception that he interprets the facts. Jesus is to him the Messiah, and

[1] Weiss has succeeded in convincing Harnack that Mark was acquainted with Q, though Harnack thinks this important result may have to be limited to this intent, that Mark at least knew the circle in which Q (or great parts of Q), before being fixed in writing, existed in a fixed oral form which was practically the same. See note on p. 176 above. This limitation, however, really means that Harnack is not convinced by Weiss's arguments, so as to accept Weiss's view of the literary relations of Mark and Q; it is Harnack's recognition of the fact that a larger part must be given to oral tradition, as well as to documents, in explaining the composition of our gospels.

the story of His life, when read out in its religious significance, is gospel or glad tidings. It was not possible for him to tell the story otherwise than he has done, for this is the truth of Jesus as it has been apprehended by him. No doubt a life of Jesus could have been written by one who never became a believer—by an agent, for example, of the Jewish or of the Roman government—who observed Him from the outside, as it were, without sympathy, and without being drawn into unison with His mind and purpose; but it would not follow that such a life would be truer than the representation of Jesus made by a believer. On the contrary, the very things that in a great spiritual life are most real and most significant would baffle the supposed impartial observer; he would either be unconscious of them, or they would mock his power of description and comprehension. Only a person responsive to the kind of influence Jesus exerted is qualified to convey a true impression of what He was. It may be quite natural for him, in trying to convey such an impression, to set the facts with which he has to deal in a certain light; but just in proportion as he reverences Jesus—just in proportion as he believes in Him and calls Him Lord—will it be unnatural for him to distort facts or to invent them.

Mark's History the History of the Son of God

That the story of Mark is the story of the Christ, of One whose consciousness from first to last is that of the Messianic King through whom the reign of God is to be established, is shown by the fact that like the source already examined Mark begins with the Baptism and the Temptation of Jesus. He has no interest in anything that precedes; he brings Jesus on the stage in the hour in which His divine sonship is proclaimed, and it is in this character that he conceives Him living and

acting all through. What the sonship to God means is rather to be made out from the gospel—which is, so to speak, a progressive illustration of it—than deduced from the words. The term Christ or Messiah, though used in the title, is not at this point used in the history. Perhaps that is to preclude misleading inferences. As the Son of God referred to in the ideal picture of the second psalm, Jesus is the Anointed in and through whom God's Kingdom is to be established; He is the Messiah; but the nature of His Messiahship and of the sovereignty it is to establish awaits definition in His life. It may quite well be that the Christ of God is not the same as the Christ of fanatical Jewish hopes. This apart, however, there is not for the evangelist any consciousness of himself on the part of Jesus except the Messianic self-consciousness; it is as Son of God that He lives, moves, and has His being, and it is in this character and consciousness that He is exhibited in the gospel. It is more than daring simply to set this aside. If we know anything at all of Jesus, we know that He was baptized by John, and that the baptism represented a crisis in His experience: if it did not mean what all our authorities represent it to mean, we may as well cease to ask questions about Him. From first to last in the gospel, Jesus acts as one conscious of a unique vocation, a unique endowment, a unique relation to God and men. It is easy to decide on *à priori* grounds that this is impossible, and not merely to leave the only Christianity known to history without explanation, but to pronounce it a complete mistake; it is easy to do this, but it is not writing history. If the life of Jesus reflected itself, in minds which submitted to its influence, in the form which we see in the gospel, then all the probabilities are that that form is substantially correct. This word or that may have suffered modification in transmission—this incident or that

may have been pointed or deflected as it was preached in this or that environment—but the attitude of Jesus to God and to men, and the attitude which this required on the part of men to Jesus, cannot have been misconceived and cannot be misrepresented. It is the direct and unconscious reflexion of an immediate impression, and the possibility of error is excluded.

Jesus is introduced in Mark as 'calling' men to follow Him, as preaching in the synagogues, 'as one having authority,' and as casting out demons (Mark 1 [16-28]). The evangelist does not represent Him as making formal claims from the outset, or putting His consciousness of His relation to God and man into challenging words, but the spiritual power with which He was invested in the baptism, and which marks Him out as the Son of God, underlies all His words and deeds. The Messiahship is exhibited, but not stated: this at least is how the evangelist understands it. That he is right in so understanding it is clear from the words of Jesus Himself (in Matt. 11 [5]), which we have considered above (p. 230 f.). To heal the sick and to preach the gospel to the poor, inadequate and unsatisfactory as some onlookers might think it, is emphatically to do 'the works of the Christ.' We do not read the opening scenes in Mark as they were meant to be read if we do not perceive that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus is latent in them and is the key to which they are all set.

A Typical δύναμις or Mighty Work in which Jesus' Consciousness of Himself is revealed

(Mark 2 [1-12])

This will become unmistakable if we examine such a typical instance in Mark of the δυνάμεις to which Jesus appeals (Matt. 11 [21 ff.]) as the healing of the paralytic in ch. 2 [1-12]. There are several points of interest in this

narrative which it is important to notice. When the man was brought to Jesus, Jesus said to him, Child, thy sins are forgiven. Some scribes who sat by accused Him of blasphemy: Who can forgive sins but God only? Jesus had His own way of dealing with the charge, but there are moderns who clear Him at a much easier rate. His words, they tell us, were merely declaratory: as He looked on the face of the paralytic man, He saw that he was truly penitent for his sins—presumably those which had induced the palsy; and knowing that under the rule of a paternal God penitence and pardon are correlative terms, He simply announced to the man what was true quite independently of the announcement, that his sins no longer stood against him in the reckoning of God. This, however, is entirely out of keeping with what follows. Jesus does not claim power on earth to declare that sins are forgiven, but to forgive them (ver. 10); and the scribes were quite right in assuming that He exercised the prerogative of pardon. He Himself proceeds to act upon their assumption. It is easy to say, Thy sins are forgiven, but not easy to tell whether anything is accomplished by the words. Who can tell whether the spiritual miracle which they assume—for of all things that we can conceive the forgiveness of sins is the most purely supernatural—really takes place? Who can certify us that the load is really lifted from the bad conscience, that despair passes away, that the gate of righteousness opens again to the man who had shut it in his own face? It is an objection of this kind, an objection not to a declaration but to what purports to be a real exercise of the prerogative of pardon, that Jesus meets in what follows. It is easy to say to a paralysed man, Arise, take up thy bed and walk; but it is hazardous, because if nothing happens the pretensions of the would-be healer are exposed. Jesus puts Himself to this test, and heals the body

with a word the effect of which is sensible and indisputable, that men may believe that He has power also to heal the soul. He works on this poor man the comprehensive miracle of redemption, forgiving all his iniquities, healing all his diseases. It is not declarations we have to do with, here or anywhere in the gospels, but achievements. Jesus no more told the man his sins were forgiven than He told him he was not lame. With the same word of redemptive power He lifted the disabling touch of sin from his soul and of paralysis from his limbs, and in doing so revealed what He was.

And what was He? Plainly for such as had faith like the paralytic and his friends He was the bearer of God's salvation: the power of God for man's deliverance in all his sorest troubles was present in Him. To refer again to Matt. $11^{5\,(2)}$ we see Him here doing 'the works of the Christ.' And here comes in another point of interest in the narrative. It contains, in the lips of Jesus Himself, what we have already seen to be a Messianic or quasi-Messianic title—the Son of Man: 'That ye may know that *the Son of Man* hath power upon earth to forgive sins, He saith to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed and go to thy house.' It has come to be taken for granted with a certain school of critics that there must be a mistake here. The Son of Man, it is argued, just because it is a Messianic title, could not be used by Jesus openly and at this early stage. If we except this instance, and another in ver. 28 of this chapter, Jesus never uses it in Mark till after Peter has confessed Him to be the Christ at Caesarea Philippi (ch. 8^{29}), and even then the disciples are commanded to keep the Messiahship a secret. This, it is assumed, answers to the actual course of events. Further, what logic requires (it is said), both here and at verse 28, is not 'the Son of Man' but 'man' simply. The Pharisees say, Who can forgive

sins but God only? and Jesus is supposed to answer, I will prove to you that not only God in heaven but man upon earth has power to forgive. This is supported by the close of the parallel passage in Matthew (9[8]): They glorified God who had given such power to men—that is, to beings of the class to which Jesus belonged. The elimination of the Son of Man from verse 28 is equally plausible. Logic seems thoroughly satisfied when we read, The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; wherefore *man* is lord also of the Sabbath. The introduction of the Son of Man into these narratives is ascribed to mistranslation. In Aramaic, the language of Jesus, a human being was spoken of as A *son of man;* and some misapprehension of this Semitic idiom led to THE *Son of Man* being introduced here instead of the generic term expressing humanity. The mistake mars the logic of the passage, and is inconsistent with what the evangelist elsewhere tells us of the time and circumstances under which Jesus did speak of Himself as the Christ, but happily we are able to correct and explain it.

In spite of the fact that this explanation and correction have become almost a tradition of criticism, the writer has no hesitation in accepting the gospel narrative as it stands. No part of the process by which 'the Son of Man' is eliminated can stand scrutiny. The expression is said to be due to mistranslation of an Aramaic document in which 'son of man' occurred in the sense of 'human being.' To say so is surely to forget that the contents of the gospel history did not circulate in the Church merely in the form of one man's translation of an Aramaic document. Granting that Mark could make the kind of mistake which is here supposed, we must remember that the story which *we* know only through him must have been known to multitudes of Christians

before he wrote; and if they all knew it in the true form—which *ex hypothesi* they must have done, as the mistake originated with him—it is inconceivable that there should be no trace of the true form left, and no indication of any attempt to correct Mark. The text of the gospels was not sacrosanct in early times. Matthew and Luke, who can both be shown to have used Aramaic documents independently,[1] no doubt follow Mark closely at this point; but even if they follow him also unthinkingly, we are safe to say that all three tell the story in the only form in which it could be told to the apostolic Church, a form which had the apostolic testimony behind it, and which could not have been modified for the whole Church, at an essential point, by the mistranslation of any person whatever.

Further, the displacement of 'the Son of Man' by 'man' has only a superficial plausibility in logic. The healing of the palsy by *Jesus* does not prove that *man* generically can forgive sins. The man who does the visible miracle in confirmation of his claim to do the invisible is to be taken at his word: but it is no more true that man generically can speak the word of forgiveness with divine effect than that man generically can effectively bid the lame walk. The only question raised, and the only question settled, is one concerning the power claimed by *Jesus;* and it is settled, not by bringing Jesus under the general category of humanity, but by an act of Jesus Himself which was as impossible for men in general as the forgiveness of sins. It is not any man, but only He who has the right to think of Himself as the Son of Man, who can forgive sins upon the earth. This is all that is covered by the healing of the paralytic. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same considerations apply to the passage about man and the Sabbath.

But this is not all. The passage with which we are

[1] See Wellhausen's notes on Luke 6^{23}, 11^{41}.

dealing is the first in the gospel in which Jesus is directly challenged while engaged in His vocation. He is doing the very work which He has come to do—revealing Himself in His proper character as the Person in whom God has visited men for their deliverance from sin and misery—when His authority is called in question. He is in truth the representative of God, but the suggestion is made that so far from representing He blasphemes, invading impiously a prerogative reserved for God alone. Are not the circumstances fitted to evoke such a kind of self-assertion as is found in the use here of the title 'Son of Man'? It is no doubt a Messianic or quasi-Messianic title, but it is not simply equivalent to the Christ. The Messiah whom it suggests is not any Messiah—is not, for example, the Messiah of national and political hopes—but a transcendent person of some kind; one through whom the Kingdom of God is to triumph, of course, but one whose very name emphasises humanity as opposed to brutality. It is in keeping with the character of such a Messiah that He should wish to forgive sins and heal diseases; it is in keeping with Jesus' consciousness of being such a Messiah that He should have and exercise both these divine and gracious powers. We have seen already how Jesus employs the title Son of Man on occasions where His humanity, in the ethical sense, is to be emphasised (see p. 256 f.); and it is this which in the first instance is to be kept in view here. In spite of the fact that it is mainly used—in agreement with its source in Daniel 7 [13]—in eschatological passages, it is not exclusively eschatological in import. It is the name which describes Jesus in His vocation as the Person through whom the Kingdom of God is established, and it indicates that the Kingdom of God is at the same time the Kingdom of humanity, the condition of things in which man is redeemed from the tyranny of brutal forces, and all humane ideals are realised.

It is relative to the Kingdom of God, just as the Son, *simpliciter*, is relative to the Father; but the Kingdom of God to which it is relative is a kingdom of grace in which men are forgiven all their iniquities and healed of all their diseases. Hence Jesus frequently uses the title Son of Man when He wishes to speak of Himself in the light of His vocation, as the Person doing the works that belong to the establishment of such a kingdom. 'The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.' 'The Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.' 'The Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins.' The name as used here is in keeping with Jesus' use of it on these other occasions, and it is thoroughly appropriate. But to displace it by 'man' is to introduce what is not only unexampled elsewhere in Scripture, but in itself inept and untrue. Accepting, therefore, the evangelic record of Jesus' words at this point, we find in them an indication, belonging to the earliest period of His ministry, that He lived and worked in the consciousness of a relation to God and to the bringing in of His reign among men which can have belonged to Him alone—such a relation, in short, as makes Him not the pattern of goodness merely, but the object of religious faith to all who look for salvation in the coming of God's Kingdom. Now this, as we have repeatedly seen, is the attitude of Christian faith to Christ, and therefore we conclude once more that such faith is justified by Jesus' consciousness of Himself.

Before leaving this passage it is proper to remark on the reference in it to faith. 'When He saw their faith Jesus said to the paralytic, Child, thy sins are forgiven.' The faith meant is that of the paralytic and his friends: their assurance that help could be had from Jesus was so great that they overcame every obstacle in order to

reach Him. *Per omnia fides ad Christum penetrat.* The power that brings man help is, of course, in every case ultimately the power of God, and therefore in a true sense God is always the object of faith; but the point here is that God's power to help is present in Jesus; it is mediated through Him and through Him alone, and hence He also becomes, as no other can be, the object of faith. This is the one attitude to Him which the New Testament discovers, and quite apart from this or that word in which He revealed His own expectation or demand, it is inconceivable that this attitude should have been mistaken. It was evoked by Jesus as the reality of what He was and did impressed itself on those who were in contact with Him. The Jesus to whom the New Testament bears witness evokes the same attitude still. But if it needed more explicit justification, that justification would be found in the many striking words of Jesus about faith. He says to suppliants for help, 'Believe ye that I am able to do this?' He says to the woman who was healed by touching the hem of His garment, 'Thy faith hath saved thee.' He says to Jairus, when news is brought that his daughter is dead, 'Be not afraid, only believe.' The faith that He claims in this last instance is the utmost reach of faith which can be demanded from man. The great enemy of faith is death. We can keep hold of God, and hope for His help, as long as there is life; but death seems to end all. Yet even in the presence of death Jesus says, Fear not, only have faith. The words have no relevance at all unless they mean that the saving help of God which is present in Jesus is stronger even than death, so that he who believes in Him can defy the last enemy. A recent commentator on Mark [1] says that the only thing in this narrative which speaks to us with living and personal power is the faith of Jesus—

[1] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, i. 118; also p. 46.

His confidence that the Father would go with Him to the ruler's house and enable Him to meet whatever emergency there was; but surely the demand of Jesus that in the very presence of death Jairus should not renounce hope, but believe that the power of God to be exercised through Him would be equal to any extremity of need, is quite as remarkable. What Jesus requires is not that Jairus should directly exhibit the same faith in God as He Himself did—a faith at which the commentator referred to can only hold up his hands in blank bewilderment—but that in His company, and *relying on what God would do through Him*, he should not despair. The help of God for the man was to be mediated through Jesus, and through Jesus also the faith of the man in God was to be mediated. There is no other relation of God's help to man, or of man's faith in God, known either to the gospels or the epistles in the New Testament; and we repeat, it is inconceivable that at this vital point the convictions and experiences evoked by Jesus should have been at variance with the mind of Jesus Himself.

The Bridegroom and the Children of the Bridechamber

(Mark 2 18-20)

One of the passages in Mark which would formerly have been pointed to without hesitation as indicating the peculiar self-consciousness of Jesus is that in which He answers a question about fasting. 'Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said to them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast while the Bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the Bridegroom with them they cannot fast. But days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in that day' (Mark 2 18-20). Originally,

only the last verse of this was questioned. Jesus, it was said, did not at this early period anticipate His own death, and He certainly did not begin to speak of it to His disciples till much later.[1] Further, the mention of His death is irrelevant: all that it is necessary to say is, 'Can the children of the bridechamber fast as long as the Bridegroom is with them? My disciples and I are a wedding party, and therefore fasting is out of place.' But a more penetrating application of this same kind of criticism carries us further. The inventive evangelist who added verse 20 from his own resources has been severely lectured for perverting the parabolic saying in verse 19 into allegory, and then continuing the allegory mechanically in verse 20, on the line of the history of Jesus and His Church. But there is something to be said for him, nevertheless. What is the *tertium comparationis* which would make it possible for Jesus to compare His disciples to guests at a wedding, for whom fasting would be out of place? It neither is nor can be anything else than the conception of Jesus Himself as the Bridegroom. But this is an allegorical conception.[2] To suppose that Jesus spoke of Himself as a Bridegroom, or as the Bridegroom, is to suppose that He had recourse to allegory—a supposition which is nothing short of distressing to many honourable men. Hence we are rather to suppose that *the whole passage* is due to the productive activity of the Church. Jesus really had no part in it. The transaction which it perpetuates was not one which took place between John and Jesus, but between the disciples of the two Masters. It has no meaning for the time to which it is said to belong, but only for the future. After Jesus died, His

[1] *The Death of Christ*, p. 23 f.

[2] Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci*, p. 20: 'Es schimmert also schon in 2 [19] der allegorische Sinn durch (auch in dem Ausdruck *so lange der Bräutigam bei ihnen ist* statt *während der Hochzeit*), und man darf 2 [20] nicht davon abschneiden.'

disciples departed from His practice. They took over from John's disciples not only baptism but prayer (Luke 11 [1]) and fasting. Jesus is here represented as giving them permission for the fasting, though a permission that only comes into effect after His death.[1]

All this, we have no hesitation in saying, is as dull as it is gratuitous. No one denies that there were in the lifetime of Jesus followers of John and Pharisees as well as disciples of Jesus Himself. They represented different types of religion, in spirit and observance, and the differences between them were both reflected on by Jesus independently, and discussed by their adherents. There is a notable word of Jesus about fasting in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 6 [16 ff.]); in Matt. 11 [2-19], and in the parallel passages in Luke, Jesus expressly compares Himself and John as religious leaders, and points the difference between them in the very sense of this passage; and He frequently came into collision with the representatives of Pharisaism on ritual observances of an analogous character (v. Mark 7 [1 ff.], Matt. 15 [1 ff.]). It is simply a mistake, therefore, to say with Wellhausen that the subject has no significance for the time at which it is introduced, but only for the future: the subject is one of a class which was undoubtedly discussed by Jesus oftener than once or twice. But if we recognise this, it will not be without influence on our interpretation and appreciation of the passage as a whole. If Jesus is the Speaker, His words must be something else than the legitimation of the practice of the early Church as to fasting, in contrast with the practice of the disciples in His lifetime. Nothing is less credible in the lips of Jesus than such artificial and prosaic legalism. But the words cease to be legal and prosaic, they become personal and inspired, poetic and moving, above the common measure

[1] All this is borrowed from Wellhausen as above.

even of the words of Jesus, provided we admit the possibility that Jesus could speak of Himself as the Bridegroom. And why should it be impossible? It is the same thought which meets us again in the parable—with allegoric traits in it no doubt, but why not?—of the king who makes a marriage for his son (Matt. 22 [2]). It has echoes in Eph. 5 [25 ff.] and in Rev. 19 [9], 21 [9]. It has antecedents in the Old Testament conception of God's relation to Israel. Certainly it is an extraordinary thing that Jesus should have conceived in this way His relation to the new people of God which was gathering round Him, but everything in Jesus is extraordinary. After the incident and the self-revelation of verses 1 to 12, we do not expect platitude or commonplace here; and the sense which Wellhausen extracts is poorer than platitude or commonplace. With the Bridegroom among them, the disciples can fairly be compared to a marriage party in which fasting would be incongruous; and what can be truer to nature than that the Bridegroom, even while he defends their joyousness, should become sensible, in the very disposition of those who question it, of that suspicion and malignity toward Himself which would one day end in murder, and turn the joy of the bridal party into a sorrow in which fasting would be sadly spontaneous? The unity, the inner truth and the poetic charm of the whole utterance are indisputable, unless we deny that Jesus could think of Himself as the Bridegroom; and for such a denial there is no ground except that it implies a consciousness on Jesus' part of Himself and of His place in God's work which men are resolved, on grounds with which historical criticism has nothing to do, not to recognise. As it stands, the revelation which it makes of Jesus is in harmony with everything which has hitherto been presented to us in the record, and we need have no hesitation in replying on it as true.

The Unpardonable Sin: Mark 3 [28-30]

(Matt. 12 [24-32], Luke 12 [10])

We have already examined, in the source common to Matthew and Luke, the words of Jesus about a sin for which there is no forgiveness. The saying on this subject in Mark, though it differs by not mentioning the Son of Man, throws an equally striking light on Jesus' consciousness of Himself. It is pronounced with a solemn assurance of its truth. 'Verily I say unto you that all things shall be forgiven to the sons of men, the sins and the blasphemies wherewithsoever they have blasphemed. But whoso shall have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit hath not forgiveness for ever, but is guilty of an eternal sin.' How is this sin committed? The Holy Spirit is that divine power which is manifested in Jesus as He casts out evil spirits; it is not something distinct from Him and to be contrasted with Him; it is simply God acting through Him for the deliverance of men from Satan. There are cases in which God acts, as it were, from behind a screen, and it is possible not to recognise Him, and to sin or blaspheme inadvertently and therefore pardonably; but in the case before us it is different. The works that Jesus did were so palpably the works of God, the operations of His holy redeeming power, that inadvertent failure to recognise them for what they were was impossible. The dullest spectator was bound to say, as the magicians of Egypt did of Moses, This is the finger of God (Ex. 8 [19], Luke 11 [20]): nothing but the blackest malignity could whisper, He has an unclean spirit, He casts out demons by Beelzebub. Nothing could more convincingly show how entirely Jesus identifies Himself with the cause of God and His Kingdom. That absolute significance of his Person and His work to which reference has been so frequently made already is the

fundamental idea here also. The solemnity and vehemence with which He speaks—'hath not forgiveness for ever,' 'is guilty of an eternal sin'—reminds us of the words in which He pronounces woes on the impenitent cities ('it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment than for you'), or of the awful warning to whoso shall deny Him before men ('him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven'). The cure of demoniacs had a peculiar value for Jesus as a demonstration that God's victory over Satan was actually in process of accomplishment, that the Kingdom of God, if one might dare to say it, was no longer a thing to be waited for, but had come to men while as yet they did not realise it (Matt. 12 [28]); but the victory of God and the coming of His Kingdom are identified with Jesus and His work. They are mediated for the world through Him, and it is because things so great are mediated through Him that unpardonable guilt attaches to those who slanderously misinterpret what He does. One may be excused if he hesitates between the forms in which Jesus' saying has been preserved by Mark and by the other early source, but there is no doubt that in either form the divine power of God at work for the redemption of men is identified with Jesus in His own words. In His own mind—we have the most solemn assurance of it—He had the same place as the Mediator of God's salvation which He has always had in Christian faith.

The Messiah and the Cross
(Mark 8 [27]–10 [45])

Such passages as those we have just examined reveal or rather betray the consciousness of Jesus as to His place in the world, and in the working out of God's purposes towards men. What He is, however, cannot be told, unless it has been in a sense discovered. The

impression which He made on those who were in close contact with Him—the impression produced not by explicit words only, but by His life as a whole, and especially by the attitude He assumed towards them and expected from them—this impression, especially if He confirmed it, is an important part of the revelation of what He was. Scholars generally have agreed that in the gospel according to Mark there is a historical sequence traceable, in a large way, which is less evident in the later gospels. At first Jesus works among His own people, and at first, too, not without response. His mighty works naturally excited enthusiasm. Such as it was, this enthusiasm seems to have reached high-water mark in the feeding of the five thousand, and from that time forward it ebbed. The feeding of the five thousand has greatly exercised those who cannot believe in it, and the most various attempts have been made to rationalise it and get rid of the miracle. Either it is said the miracle was a spiritual one—Jesus, to speak in the language of the fourth gospel, fed the multitudes with the bread of life, the word of His teaching; or He and His disciples, sharing their scanty store of provisions with the crowd, prompted others to follow their generous example, and drew forth more than enough for all. Such explanations fail to do justice to the fact that, according to all our records, the feeding of the five thousand produced an immense excitement from which Jesus and the disciples found it necessary but hard to make their escape. Jesus *compelled* the Twelve, who no doubt shared the popular enthusiasm, to go out to sea and face a rising storm rather than founder in this spiritual whirlwind; and He Himself retired to the mountain to pray (Mark 6 [45 f.]).[1] He deliberately

[1] The account given in the fourth gospel of the feeding of the multitudes has many features which suggest that it came from an eye-witness. Incidentally it explains the otherwise perplexing word ἠνάγκασεν in Mark 6 [45] and || Matthew. The multitudes wanted, in the enthusiasm of

refused to enlist under the banner of Jewish expectations, and from this time forward the breach between Him and His countrymen widens. A little later, apparently, there is a decisive rupture with the recognised religious authorities about the traditions of the elders, and He retires with the Twelve into the country north of Galilee (Mark $7^{1\,ff.}$). So far, it may be said, He has failed to make on the people the impression He desired, and His interest is henceforth concentrated on the few who have been more intimately related to Him. Have they penetrated His secret? Are they able to take Him for what He is in His own estimation, and so to continue His work in His own sense?

This is the decisive question with which we are confronted at the beginning of what Wellhausen has described as the Christian section of the gospel of Mark: 'And Jesus went forth, and His disciples, into the villages of Caesarea Philippi: and in the way He asked His disciples, saying unto them, Who do men say that I am? And they told Him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, one of the prophets. And He asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto Him, Thou art the Christ. And He charged them that they should tell no man of Him' (Mark $8^{27\,ff.}$). We have seen already that the unique self-consciousness of Jesus, which is divinely assured

the moment, to take Jesus by force and make Him a king. The disciples, whose hopes were still in many respects like those of the multitudes, were only too ready to fall in with this revolutionary movement, and it was against their will that Jesus *compelled* them to start for the other side. For Him personally it meant the recurrence of the temptations in the wilderness: all three of them can easily be discerned in the narrative. His own sense of this would be marked by His withdrawal to the mountain to pray—His flight (φείγει) as some ancient authorities read in John 6^{15}. The way in which the fourth gospel explains Mark at this point supports the accuracy of both, and makes it impossible to reduce the feeding of the five thousand to an improvised picnic. Whether we can explain it or not, it was an extraordinary event of some kind, agitating in its immediate circumstances for all concerned, and a turning-point in the history of Jesus and in His relations with His people.

from the baptism onward, breaks forth at intervals in Mark, especially when His authority or His work is challenged: here we see that it is an interest to Jesus Himself, that He has reflected on what He is, and is concerned that men should apprehend Him truly. The question, it might almost be said, is more significant than the answers. Jesus is not only conscious that He is a problem to men, He assumes that He ought to be. It is not right that people should be indifferent to Him, should never give Him a thought, or should dispose of Him summarily by saying that of course He is what other people are, and that no more need be said. To His mind, evidently, there can be nothing so important as that men should have received a true impression of Him, should think of Him as He thinks of Himself, and in their attitude to Him respond to what He knows Himself to be.

The opinions of the people are of little interest except as showing that no one regarded Jesus as a commonplace person. Every one recognised in Him a divine messenger of some kind—the Baptist returned from the dead; Elijah, the promised forerunner of the Messiah; or an ordinary prophet—one of those who appeared long ago. These are, without exception, the opinions of people who can hardly have known Jesus at all. No one who had been in His company could imagine that He was any one *redivivus*, any one but Himself. He was not the reanimation of any dead past, but an absolutely living Person, with His hand on the present and the future. When He turns to the Twelve, whom He had chosen that they might be with Him (3 [14]), and so come to know Him truly, and asks them, But you, who do you say that I am? He gets an answer which does justice at least to this difference. Peter, expressing apparently the faith or the conviction of all, says to Him, Thou art the Christ.

We cannot tell all the thoughts and hopes which gath-

ered round this designation for Peter and his comrades. At the very lowest, to call Jesus Christ was to call Him King; it was to recognise in Him the Person through whom God's sovereignty was to be established, and God's promises to His people fulfilled. But it might be used by men whose conceptions of the nature of that sovereignty, and of the processes by which it was to be established, were inconsistent, defective, or obscure. Peter might have the assurance that he must owe to Jesus all that God was going to do for Israel or for the human race, and in the strength of that assurance he might call Him the Christ, while yet he remained much mistaken as to what God was going to do, or how it was going to be done. What is properly implied in ascribing to Jesus the title of 'the Christ' is a certain attitude of soul to Him, the recognition in Him of the King through whom the blessings of the heavenly kingdom are to be mediated to men, the acknowledgment of His claim to absolute loyalty and obedience; that is all. We do not mean that this all is little; on the contrary, it has been and remains the essence of the Christian faith. But it is quite compatible with much ignorance and misconception as to the Kingdom of God; and when we consider the fanatical hopes which attached to the name in many Jewish minds, we can well understand that while Jesus welcomed in the disciples that attitude to Himself which their confession involved, He forbade them to tell any one that He was the Christ. The truth there was in their confession—the spiritual truth involved in their loyalty to Jesus and their assurance that all divine blessings would be mediated to them through Him—is a truth which literally cannot be conveyed by telling; it can only be realised in the experience of intimacy with Jesus like that through which the Twelve themselves learned it. To go about saying to people *who did not know Jesus* that Jesus was the Christ was only

to diffuse misconception. It was to draw men round Him with passionate hopes which He knew could never be fulfilled. What He found in the attitude and hopes of the Twelve was rather a basis on which He could proceed to initiate them further into the truth of His own relation to the Kingdom. They had realised that it was somehow identified with Him and dependent upon Him—this is what is meant by calling Him the Christ; its nature and character were bound up in His; but they did not yet understand what its coming meant for Him. They did not really think of its coming, they only indulged wild fantastic hopes of it; and it became the task of Jesus to discipline their thoughts to the apprehension of the stern moral realities of His vocation, realities which for His consciousness were so inevitable, or rather so divinely involved in His work.

It is difficult to understand how this representation should be questioned. The gospel according to Mark, although it is a gospel, purports also to be a historical narrative. We have seen already the evidence which connects it with Peter. It is admitted by unprejudiced judges to have been written at a time at which disciples of Jesus might well have survived. Wellhausen, who thinks that the section with which we are dealing—chapter 8^{27} to chapter 10^{45}—has been pronouncedly 'Christianised,' and to that extent rendered unhistorical, allows that it is in favour of Mark, as contrasted with what he regards as a later source, that the Christianising is limited to this section. But the fact that it is limited to a section proves that it is not 'Christianising' at all. 'Christianising' means the transmutation of the facts in the history of Jesus in such a sense that they shall support (which of themselves they would not) the later beliefs of Christians. But a writer who sought the support of Jesus for the subsequent faith of the Church would not seek

it only in the last weeks or months of His life. If he 'Christianised' the story he would not be able to do otherwise than Christianise it altogether. The occurrence of the 'Christian' phenomena in this section of the gospel, and in this only, proves that we have to do not with any dogmatic transmutation of the facts, voluntary or involuntary, but with proper historical tradition. This is the course of Jesus' life and teaching as the witnesses reported it. It is not the evangelist, but the criticism which accuses him of 'Christianising' his story, which is not historical but dogmatic. On grounds quite unconnected with history, it is unable to give to Jesus the place given to Him in the faith of New Testament Christians, and it is precluded therefore from admitting that Jesus can Himself have assumed or claimed this place. But the evidence of Mark, that after a certain crisis in His career the character of Jesus' ministry changed, is real historical evidence, which cannot on grounds like these be treated as if it did not exist. Nothing would more surely remain in the mind of Peter than that, after the crisis referred to and the confession of Jesus as the Christ on that memorable day at Caesarea Philippi, his Master had withdrawn to a large extent from teaching in the synagogues or preaching to the multitudes on the hill-side or by the lake shore, and had devoted Himself more privately to the training of the Twelve. If Jesus did act in this way, the difference would be so striking that it would naturally impress itself on the memory, and be reproduced in any narrative which was at all in contact with the facts. It has been shown above that the gospel narrative, which has the historical support of the evangelist's testimony, has also an inner consistency which pleads in its favour. Admitting that Jesus in His lifetime was connected with the Messianic hope at all—and the superscription on the Cross is of itself a demonstration that He was—it is thoroughly natural that He

should accept the title from the Twelve, expressive as it was of a spiritual attitude to Himself which He recognised as His due, that He should forbid them to use it publicly, because it was sure to be misunderstood, and that He should devote Himself thenceforth to opening the minds of the Twelve to a better comprehension of what His vocation as the Christ involved. The outward attestation and the inward consistency of this are evidence of the highest importance for its truth. To say, in spite of such evidence, that the characteristic ideas of Mark 8^{27} to 10^{45} do not really belong to the history of Jesus, but are the reflection into His history of the faith of Pauline Christians, who assumed that Jesus must have shared and expressed their own belief in His Messiahship and in His atoning death and resurrection, is historically gratuitous. But it is worse than gratuitous to suggest that the allusions at various points to the secrecy of the teaching, or to the want of understanding on the part of the disciples (*e.g.* 9^{10}, 9^{30-32}), are indications that the writer who thus misrepresented the facts, knew what He was doing, and felt it necessary to apologise for it. He was aware that Jesus in His lifetime never spoke any such words, and that no such ideas had then been in the disciples' heads; but he writes that Jesus did speak the words—only secretly; and that the disciples did hear them—only they could not take them in.[1] Surely the presumption is, to put it at the lowest, that the evangelist was a rational and moral being, and would act accordingly. In the connexion in which it stands, therefore, and with the historical support which it can claim, we do not find it necessary to dispute Mark's representation of the mind of Jesus at this stage in His history, because it implies a continuity between the self-revelation of Jesus in His lifetime and the faith of the Church in Him after His death. On the contrary, such

[1] See Wrede's *Das Messiasgeheimniss in den Evangelien*, passim.

a continuity seems as natural in itself as it is needful for the understanding of the Christian religion, and is rather to be regarded as an indication that the evangelist is in touch with truth. What then is the truth in regard to Jesus and His vocation to which we are introduced in this section as present to the mind of Jesus Himself?

Speaking broadly, it is the truth that in the Messianic calling, as Jesus conceived it, and felt Himself bound to fulfil it, were involved the death and resurrection of the Messiah. On the three distinct occasions on which He sought to initiate the Twelve into His own thoughts, these are the constant elements in His teaching (Mark 8^{31}, 9^{31}, 10^{33}). He never, indeed, so far as appears, uses in these lessons the title of 'the Christ'; He speaks uniformly of the Son of Man. His intention in this may have been, on the one hand, to avoid the term which was most heavily loaded with political associations; and on the other, to employ that which, just because it was transcendent or supermundane, could be more easily spiritualised, and which in its very form suggested that no experience of man could properly be alien to Him. Again and again and again during these last weeks and months He tells the disciples that the Son of Man must die, and after three days rise again. It is not necessary here to consider whether this or that detail in these predictions of the death and resurrection of Jesus may have been added *ex eventu* by Christian preachers or catechists.[1] It is quite conceivable that some touches in the prophetic picture may have been introduced in this way, but that does not affect the evangelist's testimony—and it must be repeated that it *is* testimony—to the fact that during the last period of Jesus' life His death and resurrection were the subjects that engrossed His thoughts.[2] The resur-

[1] See the writer's *The Death of Christ*, p. 28.

[2] If there is anything in the gospels which was certainly not invented,

rection, indeed, is merely mentioned (though the notice in ch. 9[10] that the disciples questioned with one another what the rising from the dead should be, shows that it was mentioned with a significance which arrested attention), but the sufferings and death are dwelt upon with extraordinary emphasis. It is as though Jesus were saying to His disciples all through this period, I am indeed the Messiah, the Person through whom God's Kingdom with all its hopes and blessings is to be realised, and you are right to recognise Me as such. But the Kingdom is not what you think, and as little is the vocation of the King. The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected, and be killed. His death is divinely necessary; it has to be faced in the path along which the Father calls Him. The loyalty which you rightly exhibit when you call Me 'the Christ' must be loyalty to one who dies in the Christ's vocation. The coming of the Kingdom is dependent not only on the presence of Jesus upon earth, but on His passion; the hopes which are fulfilled for us through Him are fulfilled through His death. The mention of the resurrection on every occasion on which the death is mentioned suggests that the action of Jesus in the Messianic character does not cease with His death, but is continued after it on a grander scale; the attitude of the disciples toward Him when they made the confession at Caesarea Philippi is to be maintained through the death and beyond it. It will not be changed, it will be intensified and made unchangeable, when those who have felt, with whatever indefiniteness, that Jesus is the Person

it is the story of Peter rebuking Jesus, and of Jesus turning on the chief of the apostles with the terrible reproof, 'Get thee behind Me, Satan; thy mind is set not on the things of God, but on the things of men.' The truth of this incident is all the proof we need that Jesus had spoken with impressive earnestness of His sufferings and death as involved in His divine vocation. The attempts to discredit it made by Wrede (*Das Messiasgeheimniss in den Evangelien*, p. 115 ff.) and Loisy (*Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, ii. 20 ff.) really do not call for serious criticism.

through whom God's saving help must come to them, realise that nothing less than His sufferings and death are required in order that it may come with effect. There is nothing in this that can properly be called doctrine, and unless we deny that Jesus ever thought of His death, or maintain that He could not possibly have seen in it the cup which the Father gave Him to drink, there is no reason why we should question the value of the gospel record. Its importance to our present purpose is that it shows us the death of Jesus bulking in His own thoughts as it did in those of the primitive Church. Possibly the primitive Church may have made reflections upon it which were not His, but it did not give it another or a greater place than He. The Kingdom is dependent on the King, and in some divinely necessary way on a King who dies for it: this is the mind of the primitive Church—the characteristic attitude of Christian faith—but it is also the mind of Jesus. The Church is not, in this characteristic attitude, yielding to an impulse of its own which sets it at variance with its Lord; its sense of obligation to the death of Jesus corresponds to the emphasis which Jesus Himself lays on His death as involved in the Messianic calling.

It is hardly possible to assume that the sentences in Mark which immediately follow the rebuke to Peter stand in close historical connexion with it (ch. 8^{34}–9^{1}). To part of them very exact parallels are found in Matthew and Luke in two different connexions; in Matt. $16^{24\text{-}29}$ and Luke $9^{23\text{-}27}$, which are the counterpart of Mark at this point, and again in Matt. $10^{38\,f.}$ and Luke 14^{27}, 17^{33}. These last we have already considered as part of the non-Marcan source common to Matthew and Luke (see p. 209 f.), and it is not necessary to examine them again. Jesus requires in them an absolute devotion to the King-

dom of God, but to the Kingdom as a cause which is indistinguishable from Himself. 'Whoso shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it.' Mark is the only evangelist who introduces 'the gospel' in this way, and the expression may be due to him; but there is no reason to doubt that Jesus gave His Person the significance here ascribed to it in relation to the Kingdom.[1] In precisely the same way, too, as in the non-Marcan source, He appeals to what will take place at the last day to set this significance in the strongest light. 'Whoso shall be ashamed of me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.' This is the only passage in the gospels in which the word 'to be ashamed' (ἐπαισχύνεσθαι) is used, but this does not justify us in deriving it from Paul, who also uses the word only once (Rom. 1 [16]) in the same connexion. If Jesus could say the things we have already seen about confessing and denying Him before men, He could quite easily speak of men being ashamed of Him and His words. A close connexion with the context is not to be forced. It is quite needless to argue that what is in the mind of the evangelist is specifically what Paul calls the offence of the Cross—the offence which has just been illustrated in the case of Peter—and that the shame in question is precisely that which Jews would feel before their countrymen in acknowledging a crucified Messiah; and then to infer from this that Jesus never used such words at all, but that an evangelist, steeped in the Pauline gospel, has put them into His lips. Surely there is no want of clearness, as Loisy would have it, in the idea that Jesus will be ashamed of those who are ashamed of Him, and that He will be ashamed of them in circum-

[1] Loisy can say no more against it than 'Il est possible que les mots "à cause de moi" n'appartiennent pas à la sentence primitive.'

stances in which everything for them depends on His recognition. The words never fail to impress those who hear them, and this is all they were intended to do. The evangelist may have found them in some other connexion, or perhaps in no connexion at all; but he must have conceived them to be relevant when he introduced them here, and there is not the slightest reason to suggest that they do not represent the mind of Jesus. And once more we must say it is a mind in which Jesus has the place and significance which He has always had in the faith of the Christian Church.

Before proceeding to examine the striking reference to the death of Jesus with which this section in Mark closes, we may refer to the singular passage in ch. 9 [33-50]. With the exception of ch. iv. (the parables) and ch. xiii. (the eschatological discourse) this is the only place in which Mark gives any considerable number of Jesus' sayings. They do not seem to be chronologically and historically connected, but rather to be linked to each other by some association of ideas, or even by the recurrence of the same terms. They may all be said to turn, in a manner, on the moral temper proper to disciples, and several of them are distinguished by a peculiar use of the term 'name' in connexion with Jesus. 'Whoso shall receive one of such children in My name'—ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου—'receiveth Me' (ver. 37). 'We saw one casting out demons in thy name'—ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου—'and we forbade him' (ver. 38). 'There is no one who shall do a mighty work in My name'—ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου—'and shall be able quickly to speak evil of Me' (ver. 39). 'Whoseover shall give you a cup of water to drink in name that ye are Christ's—ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι χριστοῦ ἐστε—'verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.' The recurrence of 'the name' of Jesus here is very remarkable, and there are analogous examples elsewhere in the gospels.

Cf. Matt. 10 [22] ('hated by all for My name's sake'—*διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου*); also Matt. 24 [9], Mark 13 [13], Luke 21 [17], where *διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου* occurs not in the 'little Apocalypse,' but in the part of the apocalyptic discourse which is generally admitted to come from Jesus; Luke 21 [12], *ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός μου*, where the parallel in Mark 13 [9] has *ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ*, for My sake; and finally Matt. 19 [29], where *ἕνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματός μου* = for My name's sake, corresponds to Mark 10 [29], *ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* = for My sake and the gospel's, and to Luke 18 [29], *εἵνεκεν τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ* = for the sake of the Kingdom of God. A comparison of all these instances will show that the evangelists felt at liberty to convey what they knew to be the meaning of Jesus with a certain degree of freedom; but it will hardly be doubted, however we try to interpret the separate applications of it, that a unique significance is asserted for Him, in relation to the Kingdom of God, through all the varieties of expression.[1] It is their relation to Him that exposes the disciples to universal hatred (Mark 13 [13]); it is through reliance on Him that the saving power of God is bestowed on men, and they can do mighty works (9 [39]); it is because the little ones are connected with Him that the smallest service done them is sure of its reward (9 [41]), and that any wrong inflicted on them is threatened with the most terrible judgment (Matt. 18 [6]). When we reflect how impossible it is to substitute any other name here for the name of Jesus, or to suppose that any other person could assume that he had that unique significance in relation to the Kingdom of God which Jesus here assumes for Himself, we must admit that the place which apostolic faith assigned Him in the true religion is no other than that which His self-revelation

[1] Klostermann on Mark 10 [29] suggests that possibly *ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός μου, ἕνεκεν τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ* are all expansions of an original *ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ*. If this were so it would rather strengthen than weaken the argument.

demands. It does not transcend that self-revelation, it corresponds to it, when we hear Peter declare after the resurrection that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved (Acts 4^{12}).

The last of the sections in Mark which deal with the Messiah and the Cross is peculiarly important (10^{32-45}). It opens with a historical reminiscence which it requires some courage to question. 'They were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid.' We cannot fix the locality, but the time meant is certainly not far from the end; they may even have crossed the Jordan and been moving toward Jericho. The kind of lead which Jesus took (ἦν προάγων) was apparently what amazed them; He had never before stepped out in front of them in this fashion, as though He were impatient to reach His journey's end. It is probably a true remembrance of the temper of Jesus all through this journey when Luke tells us that 'He set His face stedfastly to go to Jerusalem' (9^{51}), and that somewhere in the course of it, with His eye upon the end, He exclaimed, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it is accomplished' (12^{50}); it is in this temper that we see Him here. He is absorbed in something which the disciples have not taken in: He is rapt in it as He was in the earlier work of His ministry when His friends said He is beside Himself. 'They that followed' do not seem to be the Twelve, but others who had gathered about Him on the way; their fear may only be the sense of something unnatural in such an overstrained mental condition, as they would think it, or it may have been due to the feeling that Jerusalem was an unsafe place for a person with the ideas and purposes of Jesus. But, however we are to read the situation, it is a situation so unique and so vivid that it is impossible to regard it as unreal.

The key to it is contained in Bengel's comment on the corresponding paragraph in Matthew: *Jesus jam tum habitabat in passione sua.* It is with this preoccupation that He once more takes the Twelve apart, and begins to tell them the things that are to befall Him. The subject is still the Son of Man, and in detail the prediction surpasses those that have gone before,[1] but that need not make us question the fact that in the memorable circumstances described Jesus tried once more to initiate His disciples into His own conception of what was involved in the Messianic calling. He was under no illusion about what His going to Jerusalem meant, but He set His face stedfastly to go, nevertheless. He was conscious that there was a divine necessity in it to which He was called to submit, and He sought to enlighten the disciples concerning it. The lesson was no more successful than those which preceded. Luke puts in the strongest language its complete failure. 'And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hidden from them, and they perceived not the things which were said' (18 34). Mark (followed by Matthew) does not as at 9 32 comment upon their want of intelligence, but he records an incident which sets it in the strongest light.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come to Him with a request that they may sit, one on His right hand and the other on His left in His glory. This request is one of the irrefragable proofs that Jesus was regarded, even in His lifetime, as the Christ—that is, as the Person through whom the Kingdom of God was to come. Luke, no doubt, omits the whole incident, though he gives in

[1] It can hardly be doubted here that the event has given precision to the prophecy. In Mark it is virtually a programme of the Passion narrative in all its details. How unconsciously a catechist or preacher would give this kind of definiteness to what Jesus said of 'the things that were to befall Him' is apparent here from Matt. 20 19, who, though in other respects dependent on Mark, introduces 'crucify' into his version of Jesus' words instead of 'kill.'

another connexion (22 [24-27]) some of the words spoken by Jesus on this occasion, but that gives us no reason for doubting its historical character. 'Luke always spares the Twelve.' The disciples had already begun to believe in Jesus as the Christ, and when He resolved to go up to Jerusalem they felt that a crisis in His fortunes (and in their own) was approaching. As Jerusalem drew near, many who followed Jesus thought that the Kingdom of God was on the point of appearing (Luke 19 [11]). James and John evidently shared these expectations, and it was the intense preoccupation of their minds by them which made them insensible to Jesus' words. It is quite gratuitous to say that the request they make to Jesus would be more appropriate if it were connected with a saying like that in Matt. 19 [28] and Luke 22 [29], in which Jesus promises the disciples that they will one day sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,[1] and that the evangelist here has lost the true perspective. What this means is that only the words preserved in Luke 22 [24-27] can claim to be regarded as words of Jesus: the whole conversation of Jesus with the sons of Zebedee is fiction. Most people will find it difficult to treat such criticism seriously; one can imagine motives for it, but no reason, at least none that falls within the domain of history. The request of the two brothers is seriously made, and it is seriously taken by Jesus, but it only reveals the immense gulf between His mind and theirs. He accepts, indeed, and this is the point we must emphasise, their implied homage to Him as the King. He is going to come in glory and to sit on His throne, and it will be the supreme honour to sit at His right hand and His left. It is not only in their consciousness but in His own that the supreme place in

[1] So Loisy *ad loc*, who finds in this connexion an explanation of the word 'sit,' which he thinks otherwise inappropriate, in the request of James and John.

the Kingdom of God belongs to Him. But He knows as they do not the way which leads to that glory. He has a cup to drink, a baptism to be baptized with, before He ascends the throne. It is through drinking that cup—the cup of bewilderment which the Father is putting into His hand; through being baptized with that baptism—letting all the waves and the billows of the agony which clouds the future pass over Him: it is through awful experiences like these that His triumph is to be achieved and His Kingdom won. He knows this—how can we deny that He knew it unless by accusing Him of an inability to discern the signs of the times like that of which He impeached His contemporaries?—and He knows also that the only way to greatness in the Kingdom of God is that which He Himself must tread. Hence, far as the thoughts of the disciples are from His own thoughts, He recognises their seriousness and their loyalty when He says: 'You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup which I drink, and to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?' There is nothing, they feel in their hearts, that they would not do with Him and for Him, and they answer, 'We are able.' Appreciating their sincerity and devotion, Jesus takes them at their word. 'The cup which I drink ye shall drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized shall ye be baptized.' It is becoming common now for critics to assume that this implies the martyrdom, in the strict sense, of James and John,[1] and the natural inference of course is that Jesus never spoke such words. He could not foretell the violent death of the brothers. But it is the inter-

[1] So Loisy, ii. 238: 'Pour celui qui a rédigé cette prédiction, la mort sanglante des Zébédéïdes était un fait acquis, appartenant au passé, comme la passion même de Jésus.' Part of the attraction of this interpretation is no doubt the fact that it supports the statement of the Papias fragment published by De Boors (*Texte u. Untersuchungen*, v. ii. 166 ff.) that James and John were killed by the Jews (presumably in Jerusalem), and that John therefore cannot have been the author of the fourth gospel.

pretation which is wrong. The mood in which Jesus speaks of the things which are to befall Him as a baptism and a cup is not one which lends itself to such painfully prosaic treatment. It is nothing short of absurd to say that unless James and John were put to death—strictly speaking, it should be crucified—the words 'Ye shall indeed drink of My cup and be baptized with My baptism' are meaningless or untrue. They are full of truth and meaning in the lips of Jesus, not because James and John were subsequently put to death for the gospel—no one can prove this by historical evidence—but because He saw that these brave and simple souls, unintelligent though they were, had it in them to follow Him to the end. When He declines to assign them places on His right hand and His left, it is not that He disclaims His own place as King: but the honours claimed are not to be assigned by favour, but to those for whom they have been prepared. On what principle they are prepared we get a hint from what follows.

James and John had apparently approached Jesus in private, but what they had done became known. The other disciples, who suffered from the same misconceptions of the Kingdom and the same selfish ambition, were provoked. Jesus called them to Him and gave them all a lesson on the true nature of greatness, which was at the same time a lesson on the Kingdom and its King. 'Those who are accounted to rule the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones deal arbitrarily with them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoso will become great among you shall be your servant, and whoso will become first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.' What mainly concerns us here is the self-revelation of Jesus in the last sentence. The law of the King-

dom is illustrated supremely in the person of the King: it is in Him we see what greatness is and how it is attained. It is attained by service; at its greatest height it is attained by a service which for lowliness and sacrifice can never be outdone. The Speaker is the King, the Son of Man, who is to sit on the throne of His glory: and He is consciously reflecting, as in other places where He speaks of having *come* (Mark 2^{17}; Luke 9^{56}, 12^{49}, 19^{10}; Matt. 5^{17}, $10^{34\,f.}$), on His vocation and the way in which it is to be fulfilled. There could not be a more solemn utterance, and most people will feel a natural reluctance to suppose that it has been modified in tradition. Yet this is one of the points at which a considerable body of criticism assails the evangelist's testimony. The last words of the sentence—'and to give His life a ransom for many'—are denied to Jesus. Partly this is done for what may be considered a properly critical reason. The parallel in Luke, it is said, does not contain them. But it is a fair question how far there is a parallel in Luke at all. Luke, as has been noticed, omits the whole incident of the sons of Zebedee, and the words of Jesus he reports in 22^{27}—'For who is greater, he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth? is it not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth'—while they are akin to what we find here, are definitely appropriate to the supper-table at which they are spoken, and cannot be assumed to be an earlier and truer form of Mark 10^{45}. Dismissing this textual reason, then, as inadequate to throw suspicion on the words, we turn the other way in which they are questioned. They represent, it is said, the Pauline doctrine of redemption, and are not on the same plane with the rest of the passage. When Jesus speaks of service, He speaks of something in which the disciples are to follow Him: 'I came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and you must live in the same spirit;

you must serve as I serve if you wish to share My greatness in the Kingdom.' This, it is said, is intelligible and ethical, in harmony with all the teaching of Jesus; but with the giving of His life a ransom for many we have a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*[1]—the thought is transferred to another plane. This is not a service in which the disciples can follow Jesus; it is irrelevant and inappropriate here; and the inference is that it is not due to Jesus, but is an incongruous supplement to His words by the evangelist.

In spite of the imposing names by which it is supported, this is not an argument which impresses the writer. The *idea* contained in the words 'to give His life a ransom for many' is not one which can have been strange to Jesus. The problem of finding a ransom or equivalent for forfeited lives is one to which He has already alluded in ch. 8 [37]: 'What shall a man give in exchange for his soul (or life)?' It appears in Old Testament passages with which He cannot but have been familiar. 'None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (for the redemption of their soul is costly, and must be let alone for ever:) that he should still live alway, that he should not see corruption' (Ps. 49 [7 ff.]). This supreme need of man—this service that none can render either to himself or his brother—is suggested also in Job 33 [22ff.]: 'His soul draweth near to the pit, and his life to the destroyers. . . . Then He is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.' It pervades the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, where there is the same contrast as here between

[1] This is how it is put by Wellhausen, *Evangelium Marci*, *ad loc.* Loisy, ii. 241, says: 'L'idée de la vie donnée en rançon appartient à un autre courant que celle du service.' The other *courant* is that of Pauline theology. He refers to Rom. 15 [8], Phil. 2 [7-8], Gal. 1 [4], 2 [20], and then writes: 'Mark 10 [45] paraît conçu d'après ces passages. L'idée du "rachat de vie" était familière à l'évangéliste, 8 [37].' Why not 'familière à Jésus'? It is His words which are quoted in 8 [37].

one and many—the one Righteous Servant and the many whom He justifies and whose sins He bears at the cost of giving His life for them (Is. 53 [10-12]). The ideas of the passage, therefore, present no antecedent difficulty: they are ideas which lie at the heart of the ancient religion. Further, there is nothing incongruous, nothing which makes us feel that we have risen (or sunk) to another plane of thought, when these ideas are treated as if they were continuous with that of service. They really are continuous; they are naturally regarded by the Speaker as indicative of the supreme service which the many need and which He must render. He served them in numberless ways, but it was not inconsistent with any of these ways, it was only carrying service to its utmost limit, when He gave His life a ransom for them. It is quite true that the disciples cannot do the same service. Our lives have no such virtue in them as His sinless life, and cannot be prized at such a price. Nevertheless, we must follow Jesus in doing service even to this limit: 'We also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren' (1 John 3 [16]). If, now, there is no objection on these grounds to Jesus having uttered the words here put into His lips, the only ground on which they can be rejected is that they imply a consciousness, on the part of Jesus, of His own relation to the ideas they convey, which is inherently incredible. The ideas, it must be admitted, were in circulation, and the subsumption of them under the general conception of service is entirely appropriate; all that can be disputed is that Jesus made the application of them to Himself.

This, it may confidently be said, can only be maintained against the total impression which the representation of Jesus in the gospels makes upon us. Jesus is not a prophet, He is to His own consciousness the Messiah, the Person through whom prophecy is to be fulfilled and the Kingdom of God established. To establish God's King-

dom is to do the supreme service to humanity, and just as we have seen Him already declare His sole adequacy to the task when it is conceived as the revelation of the Father (p. 239), so here we find Him declare His adequacy to it again when it is conceived as the ransoming of forfeited lives by the surrender of a life worth more than all. 'To understand Him'—as Dr. George Adam Smith has said in a memorable page already quoted[1]—'it is sufficient to remember that the redemptive value of the sufferings of the righteous, an atonement made for sin not through material sacrifice but in the obedience and spiritual agony of an ethical agent, was an idea familiar to prophecy. It is enough to be sure, as we can be sure, that He whose grasp of the truths of the Old Testament excelled that of every one of His predecessors, did not apply this particular truth to Himself in a vaguer way, nor understand by it less, than they did. His people's pardon, His people's purity—foretold as the work of a righteous life, a perfect service of God, a willing self-sacrifice—He now accepted as His own work, and for it He offered His life and submitted unto death. The ideas, as we have seen, were not new; the new thing was that He felt they were to be fulfilled in *His* Person and through *His* Passion. But all this implies two equally extraordinary and amazing facts: that He who had a more profound sense than any other of the spiritual issues in the history of Israel, was conscious that all these issues were culminating to their crisis in Himself; and that He who had the keenest moral judgment ever known on earth was sure of His own virtue for such a crisis—was sure of that perfection of His previous service without which His self-sacrifice would be in vain. . . . It is a very singular confidence. Men there have been who felt themselves able to say "*I know*," and who died like Him for their convictions. But He was

[1] *Jerusalem*, ii. 547 f. See above, p. 266.

able to say "*I am.* I am that to which prophecy has pointed," and was able to feel Himself worthy to be that.' Nothing could be truer to the gospel presentation of Jesus. The difference between 'I know' and 'I am' is the difference between the prophet and the Saviour, between the Old Testament and the New; and the passage with which we are dealing, though a supremely important instance, is only one instance after all of the habitual and characteristic consciousness of Jesus. If it stood alone, the criticism which we have been discussing might seem more plausible; but careful scrutiny of the words in the light of Jesus' self-revelation as a whole lifts them above the shadow of a doubt. In regarding Jesus as Redeemer at the cost of His life, as well as Revealer of God, the consciousness of the New Testament Christian corresponds to the consciousness of the Christ Himself.

The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem
(Mark 11 1-10)

The incident we have just examined is closely followed in Mark by another in which also we see how Jesus thought of Himself. The circumstances of His entrance into Jerusalem were not accidental, so far as He was concerned. The fourth gospel, indeed, tells us that His disciples did not realise at the time what they were doing (12 16): only after the resurrection did it occur to them that they had unconsciously been fulfilling prophecy. But Jesus, it may be said, organised the procession; He sent for the ass's colt on which He was to enter the capital in lowly state. On His part it is a Messianic act, and reveals the consciousness of the King. It is difficult to deny that the multitudes who shouted 'Hosanna' were without some perception of this, though their ideas of the kingship may have differed widely from His. They hailed Him as 'Son of David,' or thought of the Kingdom He

was to restore as that of 'our father David' (Mark 11 [10]), but the humble pomp suggested rather a Prince of Peace than the warrior king who had stretched the bounds of Israel from Egypt to the Euphrates. In any case, however, the triumphal entry is the act of One who identifies His own coming with the coming of the Kingdom of God. 'Son of David' may be a misleading description of the Messiah, but it is with the consciousness of being the Messiah that Jesus here passes before us.

The Wicked Husbandmen
(Mark 12 [1-12])

Of the various utterances of Jesus in Jerusalem, the one which is first reported by Mark is not the least important to our argument. It is usually called the parable of the wicked husbandmen, but it is not really a parable, like those which we find in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, but an allegory. A parable is independent of its interpretation and application; the parable of the sower, for example, describes what happens in Nature every year, whether we can discern its spiritual teaching or not. But it is otherwise with allegory. Allegory only comes into existence through the application which is to be made of it: to take the case before us, no proprietor and no husbandmen ever really acted as the proprietor and the husbandmen are here represented as doing. The story has no truth of its own: it is only the relations of God and Israel which are represented in this artificial form. This cannot be disputed, but the confidence with which it is inferred that the words are not those of Jesus is more than the writer can understand. Jülicher, for example,[1] while admitting that Jesus on ex-

[1] *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, ii. 385. Cf. Loisy, ii. 319: 'Comme beaucoup d'allégories, celle-ci n'a qu'une valeur de conception théorique et théologique.' The theology, of course, is that of the Church, not of Jesus.

ceptional occasions may have used allegory, not parable, cannot avoid the suspicion that this 'parable' is due to a believer of the first generation, who, in dependence on Isaiah, chapter 5, and on parables of Jesus to which he already gave an allegorical interpretation, is seeking to justify the death of Jesus to the religious sense. It is the last and highest proof of God's patience, and must be immediately followed by judgment. The whole, he thinks, shows us how the history of Israel was regarded by the average man who had seen the crucifixion of Jesus and yet believed in Him as Son of God. It is a piece of early Christian apologetic in which we see how the Christian consciousness answered, partly to itself, partly to Jewish attacks upon it, the difficulties presented by the death of its Messiah. In a similar line the passage is criticised by Loisy and many others.

There are, however, serious objections to this whole mode of treatment. To begin with, there is no reason why Jesus should not have used allegory as well as parable. We may be quite right in thinking that it is an inferior literary *genre*, but it is not used here for literary but for practical purposes, and what was done by Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Psalmists, may quite well have been done by Jesus too. Further, if this allegory had been the work of an early Christian apologist, there are two points in which it would almost certainly have been different. The drastic statement in verse 9—'He will come and destroy the husbandmen and give the vineyard to others'—would have been qualified. This answers to Jesus' conception of the destiny of Israel or her rulers, and of the Kingdom of God (cf. Mark 13[2]), but not to that which we can see from Acts prevailed among the early Christians. They had no such sense as He of what Israel had forfeited by rejecting Jesus, and of what a complete breach had thus been made between the past

and the future in the history of the true religion. This is one point: the other is that a Christian who invented such an allegory to justify the death of the Son would hardly have left Him dead. He would have contrived to introduce somehow the resurrection of Jesus, and His entrance into His inheritance in spite of the murderers. It may be said that he does this, in such vague fashion as his literary method admits, in the quotation from the 118th Psalm—'The stone which the builders despised, the same has become head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes'; but even if this be admitted, we have still to ask why Jesus should not have spoken thus Himself. In point of fact, the whole plausibility of criticism like this depends on the insulation of the passage, and on the legitimacy of treating it as if it stood alone. But it cannot legitimately be treated thus. The Jesus who is represented as speaking in it is the Person whose unique consciousness of Himself and of His relation to God and His Kingdom has already been revealed in ways that cannot be disputed. As the destined Messianic King, He is the Person in whom Israel's history culminates, and it was as certain to Him as prophecy and experience and divine insight could make it, that for Him the history must culminate in a great tragedy. He was the Son, coming after all the servants, but destined to drink a more awful cup, to undergo a more tremendous baptism than they. Not that this was the last reality in His consciousness: the resurrection which annulled death always lay beyond, and He lifts His head in triumph as He points to it in the words of the Psalm. Nor can we say that an allegory like this is a proper enough thing to write, a good subject for private meditation, but that it is not suitable in a *concio ad populum:* no one could see its bearings. The evangelist expressly tells us that it hit the mark when it was spoken (ver. 12).

But how extraordinary, when we take it as the utterance of Jesus, is that conception of Himself and of His place in the designs of God which it reveals. All God's earlier messengers to Israel are servants; He is not servant but Son. He is not *a* Son, but the one beloved Son of the Father (εἷς, ἀγαπητός, ver. 6); He is the heir —all that is the Father's is His. To send Him is to make the final appeal; to reject Him is to commit the sin which brings Israel's doom in its train; yet even His rejection by Israel is not for Him final defeat. God will yet exalt Him and put the inheritance into His hands. In the circumstances of the moment it was inevitable that Jesus should reflect upon God's dealings with Israel and His own place in them; and it is no objection to His reflections to say that they represent the mind of Christians generally, who knew He had been crucified yet believed Him to be the Son of God. He believed Himself to be the Son of God, and when He read the history of Israel in His filial consciousness it unfolded itself to Him as we see it in this allegory. The stupendous thing here, in harmony though it be with His self-revelation as a whole, is the place which He assigns to Himself in the story. It justifies the attitude of the New Testament towards Him, but it is gratuitous to say that it is the product of that attitude. The converse is the fact.

David's Son and David's Lord

(Mark 12 [25-37])

No critical difficulty is raised about this passage, and the theological discussions to which it has given rise hardly concern us. It will be universally admitted that in the mind of Jesus 'son of David' was at least an inadequate description of the Messiah. David might have many sons by natural descent, but as only one of them could be the Messiah, it must have been something dis-

tinct from natural descent which gave Him his title. No doubt those who hoped for the coming of the son of David meant by the term one who would inherit all that David represented to a patriotic Jew—a hero king who would restore the national independence and empire. To Jesus this was as insufficient a title to Messiahship as physical descent itself. Whether He repudiated the physical descent as He repudiated the political ambitions need not be discussed: what is clear from the passage as a whole is that, in the mind of Jesus, Messiahship depends not on a relation to David, but on a relation to God. How this relation is conditioned, physically or metaphysically, we are not told; but the Messiah is the person to whom God says, 'Sit on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.' Jesus did not discuss questions of this kind at random: His interest in the current ways of conceiving the Messiah was connected with the fact that He was Himself fulfilling the Messianic vocation. Of all Old Testament passages, that which is most frequently referred to in the New is the opening verse of Psalm 110, with its mention of the right hand of God; and this way of representing the exaltation of the Messiah goes back, as we see, to Jesus Himself. The heavenly voice which spoke to Him at the opening of His ministry in the words of one Psalm, 'Thou art my Son,' speaks in His soul at the close of it in the corresponding and, if possible, more exalted words of another, 'Sit at my right hand.' This is an immediate inference from the fact that Jesus regarded Himself as Messiah. We cannot enter into the elevation which these words convey. Even the resurrection of Jesus only imperfectly illustrates them. But they are involved in the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, and they justify all that Christians mean when they call Him Lord.[1]

[1] If we limited our view to Jesus' criticism of 'Son of David,' as an

The Date of the Parousia
(Mark 13 [32])

We have already referred elsewhere (p. 239) to the well-known word in which Jesus declares that 'of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.' It is needless to say that it has been disputed, but it may be worth while to indicate the purely subjective grounds on which this is done. When Jesus was asked about the precise date of the Messianic advent, He declared roundly, says Loisy,[2] that this was the secret of the heavenly Father: all He could guarantee was that the Kingdom of heaven would appear suddenly and unexpectedly; no one would have foreseen it, hardly any one would have given it a thought. This is set down as the declaration of Jesus, and then M. Loisy proceeds: 'In the form which Mark has given it, it seems to suggest an apologetic preoccupation, as though there were a desire to justify the Christ for not having indicated the date of an advent which was clearly being delayed, by alleging that according to Jesus Himself this was a point of which the angels were ignorant, and of which the Messiah might well be ignorant too.' Could arbitrariness be more wantonly arbitrary than this? 'The form which Mark has given' to the utterance of Jesus is the only form in which we know anything about it; to

adequate description of the Messiah, we might say that this passage was on a level with those belonging to our other early source in which He speaks of Himself as 'more than Jonah,' 'more than Solomon,' 'more than the Temple' (see p. 250); but the words in which God addresses the Messiah, and which it is impossible to leave out of account, lift us to a far greater height. One may say this without going as far as Dalman, who (referring to Isaiah 49 [5], Jer. 1[5]) thinks it would only be natural that Jesus being 'the Son,' as distinguished from all servants, should presuppose, not merely selection and predestination, but also a creative act on the part of God, rendering Him what no one, who stands in a merely natural connexion with mankind, can ever by his own efforts become.—*The Words of Jesus*, p 286.

[2] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, ii. 438.

assume that we know what Jesus *meant*, apart from this, and on the strength of this assumed knowledge of His meaning to criticise Mark's record of His words, is simply unreal. There is something almost naïve in the assertion that in the circumstances in which Jesus preached the gospel it ought to have been enough (*devait suffire*) to declare that the date in question was the secret of the Father; there was no need to say more than, No one knows but the Father.[1] Things do not happen in accordance with our *à priori* notions of what ought to be adequate in the circumstances; and the real ground on which this saying is rejected is unambiguously given in what follows. 'The use of the term Son, without qualification, to designate the Saviour, does not belong to the language of Jesus nor to that of the primitive evangelic tradition.' This assertion, however, is as unsupported as it is peremptory. If we do not know the language of Jesus and that of the primitive evangelic tradition through Mark and the other document we have examined, we do not know anything about it, and this unqualified use of Son is common to both (see p. 240). To eject it from both is only possible if we reject the historical evidence altogether, and proceed on a dogmatic assumption that Jesus *cannot* have been conscious of such a relation to God as this use of the term implies. But our whole study of the gospels has brought us into contact with a Person whose consciousness of His relation to God is nothing if not unique; and there is no reason, with the evidence of the two most ancient sources in our hands, to doubt that on occasion He expressed it in this striking way. Nothing, as Schmiedel has insisted, was less likely to be invented by men

[1] It is rather curious that Dalman, who also rejects the evangelist's testimony here, and ultimately on the same grounds as Loisy, thinks that the original saying ran: 'Of that day or hour not even the angels in heaven know'—the words referring to the Father and the Son being added afterwards.—*The Words of Jesus*, 194.

who worshipped Christ than the statement in this text about the Son. Far from serving any apologetic purpose, it called itself for defence which Christians were often perplexed to give.[1] The circumstance that the Son is used in it, in a sense which did prevail in the consciousness of Christians afterwards, is no evidence that it originated there; it only shows again that the consciousness of Christians is not unsupported by that of the Christ.

The Last Supper

(Mark 14 22-25)

Nothing in the gospel, as it was understood by its writer, reveals Jesus more clearly than the Last Supper. But before proceeding to this involved subject, we may refer in passing to the memorable word recorded as spoken by Jesus at the anointing at Bethany: 'She hath done what she could: she hath anointed My body beforehand for the burying. And verily I say unto you, wheresoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her' (Mark 14 8 f.). We must remember that when these words were spoken Jesus' death was at hand. He Himself knew it, and though probably His disciples generally were far enough from

[1] The writer has no doubt whatever that this is a genuine word of Jesus, and just as little doubt that it must be taken absolutely as a disclaimer on the part of Jesus of all knowledge whatsoever as to the time of the advent. To say that one does not know the day or the hour when a great event will happen is an impressive rhetorical way of saying that He does not know the time at all; and we can easily believe that Jesus used it in this sense. It is hardly conceivable that He used it in any other. If it is taken, not absolutely, but as a qualification of the sentence that the decisive event in question will certainly happen in the lifetime of living men, it ceases to be impressive and becomes trivial, not to say grotesque. It is practically incredible that Jesus should have said 'All this will happen within a generation, but it is not in the power of man or angel, no nor even of the Son, to fix the precise date.' But if Mark 13 32 is not to be taken as a qualification of Mark 13 30, but absolutely and by itself, the probabilities are that in spite of their juxtaposition in the Gospel they originally referred to different things.

entering into His mind, there was one person near who had divined that they could not have Him long with them, and whose heart overflowed in this passionate demonstration of affection. It is Jesus who puts the mournful poetic interpretation upon the act of the woman—she hath anointed My body beforehand for the burial; it is Jesus also, moved by a love so generous, who solemnly rewards it with an immortality of renown. The criticism is hardly to be envied which finds anything here to question, yet it has become almost a commonplace of criticism in a certain school that the last words do not come from Jesus, but are the reflection of a Christian preacher. One can understand that a Christian preacher in repeating them might involuntarily change 'the gospel' (as in Mark) into 'this gospel' (as in Matthew)—thinking as he spoke of the message which he was actually delivering—but it is not easy to understand how they originated in preaching. It may be that Jesus was not ordinarily accustomed to speak of 'the gospel' or of 'the whole world,' but the circumstances were not ordinary, and He must have had means of expressing the ideas (cf. 13^{10}). Anything which suddenly and deeply moved Him seems to have opened to His mind the vast issues of His work—the devotion of this woman, or the faith of the centurion—which called up the vision of the multitudes who should come from the East and the West, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God (Matt. 8^{10}). But there is a more serious difficulty in the way of ascribing this saying to a Christian preacher, and then supposing that it has been mistakenly transferred to the lips of Jesus. As the word of a Christian preacher it is disagreeable, to say the least—a pompous homiletical extravagance, having no vital relation to the circumstances; in the lips of Jesus and in the historical situation it is living, natural and sublime—a word of the Lord which needs no attes-

tation, but that it stands where it does, as His word. Who could so reward such an expression of devotion, who could think of so rewarding it, but He who was touched by its passion and challenged to its defence? The common sense, not to say the general heart, of man may safely be appealed to here against the pedantry in which criticism sometimes loses its way.[1] The interest of this word of Jesus for our subject is that it virtually identifies Him—perhaps it would not be too much to say that in particular it virtually identifies the story of His death—with the glad tidings to be brought to all the world. The anointing at Bethany is in Mark the prelude to the passion: it is as an actor in the opening scene of the great drama of the redemption that this woman has a perpetual memorial in the Church. This is in keeping with Mark 10^{45} and with what we shall presently find in the narrative of the Supper, but we cannot think this agreement unfavourable to its truth. What it does discredit is the idea that in its conception of the gospel the Christian Church entered on lines not only unknown to the mind of Jesus but directly opposed to it. If the Church was conscious of being redeemed through His passion, He was conscious that through His passion He became its Redeemer.

The story of the Supper, so far as we are here concerned with it, is given in Mark $14^{22\,ff.}$: 'And as they were eating He took bread, and when He had blessed, He brake it and gave to them, and said, Take ye: this is My body. And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave to them: and they all drank of it. And He said unto them, This is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when

[1] A striking illustration in Loisy's remark *ad loc.*: En faisant dire à Jésus que cette histoire aura sa place dans l'Évangile, *Marc donne à entendre qu'elle n'y a pas toujours été.* Really?

I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.'[1] A much longer volume than this would not enable one to describe even in outline the critical treatment of these seemingly simple words. They purport to be historical, and it is only the most 'advanced' criticism which has radically questioned their character. This has been mainly done on two grounds. First, it is said that on the ground of the general character of Mark's gospel, *Pauline influence may be assumed* at this point without proof. The Pauline affinities of Mark are supposed to be seen in his use of the term εὐαγγέλιον, in expressions like that about the Son of Man giving His life a ransom for many, and in the frequent comments on the inability of the Twelve to understand the doctrine of the Cross—the genuine gospel as Paul preached it. In the passage before us the mention of the covenant, in particular, is alleged to be Pauline: the distinction of the old and the new covenant was one of which the apostle made much in his teaching, whereas in the teaching of Jesus the term covenant does not occur at all. To these considerations, jointly and severally, we can attach but little weight. We have seen already that there is no reason to question, in most of them, the historical character of what is described as Pauline; and it is a violent hypothesis to start from, that what purports to be the historical account of a solemn hour in the intercourse of Jesus and the Twelve, only found currency in the Church—yet did find it universally—in a form so pervaded by Pauline ideas, repellant to the Twelve, that its historical character may be said to be utterly lost. As for the use of the term covenant, we must not forget the circumstances of the hour. The Supper had some connexion, more or less intimate, with the Passover; and that annual sacrifice, which commemorated and ratified God's covenant with Israel, would naturally suggest the

[1] See *The Death of Christ*, pp. 46 ff.

term—provided the thoughts associated with it were in Jesus' mind at the time. It is important, too, in this connexion, not to overestimate the place of the idea in the mind of Paul. Apart from the passage (1 Cor. 11 [23 ff.]) in which he gives his account of this same event—a passage in which the interpretative word 'new' may be his own—there is but one other in all his epistles where the same use is found, viz. 2 Corinthians, chapter 3. It is precarious, therefore, to argue that its presence here is due to him; and while there is no indication in the New Testament that the liturgical phraseology connected with the Lord's Supper was sacrosanct, it is nevertheless thoroughly improbable that an influence originating with a man like Paul, who was the centre of such violent antipathies, should have moulded every form of it which obtained recognition in the Church.[1]

The second ground on which the historical character of this passage has been questioned is internal to itself, yet does not exclude a reference to Paul. When it is closely scrutinised, it is said to betray two minds—two currents of thought—two strata of ideas—two 'perspectives'—which are inconsistent with each other. The first is that which is disclosed in ver. 25: 'Verily I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.' Here, it is said, we have an utterance in keeping with the situation, and entirely intelligible to those to whom it was addressed. Jesus does not even speak expressly in it of Himself as the Messiah; all he has in view is the imminent coming of the Kingdom; it is His *adieu* to the Twelve, and His *rendez-vous*, the scene of the latter being the Kingdom of God; but there is nothing in it about His death or His resurrection. The words, like all the genuine words of Jesus, maintain the perspective of

[1] I do not forget the *Didaché*, nor the perplexing text of Luke 22 [14-20].

the near Messianic advent, and this is the token that they are really His.[1] This is the view of Loisy, who admits that while we can see very well how this perspective was broken by what actually happened, it is less possible for us to apprehend clearly the manner in which faith, after the passion, could derive from these eucharistic words the Christian sacrament. It is not only less possible, but quite impossible. If Jesus did not say a word about His death at the Supper, then an ordinance which has its *raison d'être* in the proclamation of His death cannot by any ingenuity be derived from His words. It could not have occurred to Paul any more than to anybody else. Paul indeed repudiates in the most express terms any suggestion that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, as he had introduced it at Corinth, owed anything to himself. 'I received of the Lord,' he says, 'that which also I delivered unto you' (1 Cor. 11 [23]). There has been some discussion as to what exactly Paul means by referring to the Lord as his authority here, but surely without much reason. M. Loisy argues that he appeals to the Lord rather than to the apostolic tradition, because he is conscious, undoubtedly, that he is not merely reporting the fact of the institution—his knowledge of which he would owe to the tradition in question—but interpreting it at the same time in the light which the Lord had given him. But the tradition, in what M. Loisy regards as its original form—the only form in which Paul could become acquainted with it—is in no sense interpreted in 1 Corinthians 11 [23 f.]; on M. Loisy's own showing, it is shunted, and replaced by something which has no connexion with it whatever. Or if we suppose that a faint echo of it remains in 'till He come' (1 Cor. 11 [26]), this is all that remains: the words which Paul gives as spoken by

[1] Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, ii. 540.

Jesus, Jesus did not speak, and the words which Jesus did speak contained no suggestion of those put into His lips by Paul. We do not get over these difficulties by suggesting that the fusion (*mélange*) of history and of Pauline theology in 1 Corinthians 11 [23 ff.], and thereafter in Mark, took place spontaneously, in the subconscious region of the soul, where dreams and visions are generated; and that the apostle presented a vision which he had had as a reality, without troubling himself about the circumstance that the witnesses of the Last Supper had not attributed to Jesus the words which he now put into His lips. The vision here, we must remark, is a pure hypothesis, excogitated by a modern scholar for the support of another hypothesis; and whether it be true or not that no one thought in those days of keeping two registers of Christian teaching, one for *souvenirs évangéliques* and the other for *révélations de l'Esprit*—a point on which, with *both* gospels *and* epistles in our hands, the very existence of which affirms the distinction, we cannot give an unqualified assent to M. Loisy—it is certain that there is a far simpler explanation of Paul's reference to the Lord. It is not the only thing of the kind in 1 Corinthians. The Corinthians, apparently, were disposed to treat Paul's authority rather lightly, and where he can he appeals directly to Christ. In the seventh chapter he does so as explicitly as he does here: 'To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord' (ver. 10): 'Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord' (ver. 25). No one talks about visions here: the Lord is referred to as known in the apostolic tradition of His words, which, just because they are His, are for Christians an authority beyond appeal. It is the same in the account of the Supper. The Corinthians were taking liberties with it, perverting it into a celebration of their own, as if Paul had

instituted it of his own motion, and they might treat it as they pleased; and what he says is, It is not my ordinance at all, but Christ's. It is on His authority it rests, and in His dying words its significance is declared. It would be more than extraordinary if, in conditions like these, Paul wrote to the Corinthians in the guise of a historical narrative something which is entirely destitute of historical value.[1] A person who in such circumstances could not or did not distinguish between matter of fact attested by evidence and visions generated in the subliminal self would not be a responsible person. We have no hesitation therefore in holding that Paul reproduces the apostolic tradition at this point, and does so in the full sense of its value as a historical authority connecting the Supper as he observed it with the Lord Himself. To say that 'the perspective of the Messianic festival excludes the memorial of the death,' is obviously to say what the authors of the gospels did not feel, what Paul did not feel, what readers of the New Testament have never felt. There is no reason in the nature of things why Jesus, when He ate the Last Supper with His Disciples, should not have had both His impending death and His ultimate triumph present to His mind, and we need have no difficulty in accepting the evidence that He did think and speak of both. The references to His body and blood do not belong to another stratum of thought, inconsistent with that which speaks of drinking the wine

[1] Ce serait méconnaître entièrement l'état d'esprit des premiers croyants que de voir dans cette circonstance une impossibilité, comme si Paul avait dû rejeter sa vision—that is, the vision imagined for Him by M. Loisy—parceque les anciens disciples ne lui avaient pas raconté le dernier repas en cette forme, et comme si le récit de Paul, supposé qu'il soit venu à la connaissance de Pierre ou de quelque autre témoin, avait dû provoquer un démenti formel, qu'on se serait fait une obligation de répandre dans toutes les communautés. Loisy, ii. 532 n. 1.—*The Death of Christ*, 112 f.

new in the Kingdom of God; they are part of a whole which filled His thoughts, and which He revealed in pregnant words to His friends. No doubt they could only grasp them imperfectly at the moment, but it is a mistake to say that they can only be understood in the context of Paul's theology. They could arrest, fascinate, move, and stimulate the mind; they were there thenceforth with the authority of Jesus for Christian thought to brood upon. Without discussing their authenticity further, we have now to ask what light they cast on Jesus' consciousness of Himself.

It is the nature of a symbol that it can be set in different lights, and always seems to call for further interpretation. But from the very beginning, the symbolism of the Supper and the words which gave the key to it spoke unambiguously to the Christian mind. They spoke of Jesus giving Himself, in His body and blood, in all the reality of His humanity and His passion, to be the meat and drink of the soul. They spoke of a covenant based on His sacrifice of Himself—not merely a bond in which believers realised their brotherhood, but a new relation to God into which they entered at the cost of His life. They spoke of a transcendent kingdom in which all the hopes and yearnings of earth would be fulfilled, and in which the Master, who was about to die, would celebrate His reunion with His followers in a world where death and sorrow have ceased to be. We cannot think that less than this was in the mind of Jesus when He said, 'This is My body—this is My covenant blood—I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine till I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of God.' But no Christian faith ever put Jesus in a more central and commanding place than this. It is not a place which can either be taken or shared by another; it is all His own. This unique and extraor-

dinary place is not only given to him, but taken by Him. It is not taken only when it is thrust upon Him; it is assumed in the words He here speaks, and in the symbolic acts which accompany them, before any one has seen what they involve. The experience of the Church for two thousand years justifies the self-assertion, or rather we should say the self-revelation, of Jesus in the Supper, but it is not the Church's experience which is reflected in the narrative. The same wonderful Person whose incommensurable greatness has already flashed upon us in this scene or that of the gospel history here rises as it were to His full stature before our eyes, and shows us the ultimate meaning of His Presence and His work in the world. The revelation is one that justifies all that Christians have ever felt or said of their debt to Jesus; and it is one of the services the Supper does to the Church, that it recalls Christians periodically to the things which are fundamental in their faith—the atoning death of Jesus, fellowship with God through Him, the assurance of immortality. We do not feel it presumptuous to conceive such thoughts or to accept them as true; they are in the mind of Christ before they are in our minds, and we rest on them as realities in Him.

The Final Confession

(Mark 14 [62])

The trial of Jesus presents many difficulties to the historical student, but it is an excess of scepticism which would question the one reference to be made to it here. As J. Weiss has remarked,[1] there were ways of knowing what took place at the meeting of the Sanhedrin. Jesus had at least one adherent there, Joseph of Arimathea; and it is simply inconceivable that His friends should

[1] *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, 197.

not, after His death, have made the most interested inquiries. The grounds of His condemnation must have been discussed in Jerusalem between His older followers and His enemies, and the evangelists certainly believed what they have put on record. That there are discrepancies in their accounts is indubitable, and that Luke in particular does not at this point follow Mark as he usually does in narrative, but represents an independent tradition, is also, in the opinion of the writer, indubitable; but the divergences are for our purpose immaterial. According to Mark, the council had considerable difficulty in finding a ground on which to condemn Jesus. 'They sought witness against Him to put Him to death and did not find it' (14[55]). The witnesses lied, and were not even coherent or consistent in their lies. The most promising were some who asserted that they had heard Jesus say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and after three days I will build another not made with hands' (14[58]). The Temple, as the dwelling-place of God, was sacred, and to violate it, as Wellhausen points out, was still, as in the days of Micah and Jeremiah, a blasphemy against God punishable with death. But it is quite needless to argue with him that this was the blasphemy for which Jesus was condemned, and that the reluctance of Christians of the early days to admit that Jesus could have said anything disrespectful to the Temple led them to misrepresent the truth, and to introduce as the ground of condemnation another charge —that of claiming to be the Christ—which does not involve blasphemy at all. It is not clear what Jesus said about the Temple. In Mark 13[2] He predicts its destruction in the most explicit terms; and as both Matthew and Luke copy them, early Christians do not seem to have been so embarrassed as Wellhausen supposes. But whatever He had said, the representation

of His words by the witnesses was so wanting in consistency that after all it was found impossible to proceed upon it (14[59]). The council wished to maintain the appearance of legality, and after a vain attempt to get Jesus to compromise Himself about the Temple, the chief priest took another line. He brought up the Messiahship of Jesus. This implies that, though Jesus was not in the habit of publicly declaring Himself to be the Messiah, the idea was somehow or other associated with His name: the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and the excitement and significant cries which accompanied it, are evidence that this was so. We may assume that the chief priest, when he said to Jesus, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? had in view the formulation of a charge on which Jesus could be arraigned before Pilate. The Christ, however qualified, means the King; and it was as King of the Jews, a rival to Caesar, that Jesus was to be delated to the governor. In this character, too, He actually was presented and sentenced to die, as the inscription on the Cross proves. But His answer to the priest's appeal—or as Matthew puts it, to his adjuration—goes far beyond a bare assent, 'Jesus said, I am, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven' (14[62]). It is as though at the supreme moment of His life Jesus fully revealed the secret of what He was. 'I am the Christ' means 'I am the promised King, He through whom God's purposes are to be fulfilled and His sovereignty established; I am the Christ, as the future will gloriously declare.' It is needless to argue that for the evangelist and his readers the Speaker and the Son of Man were one and the same; and the independent tradition in Luke makes it clear that this was so also for those who were immediately addressed (Luke 22[66-70]). They perceived that Jesus was making for

Himself an astounding, and what they considered, or affected to consider, a blasphemous claim, and it was on the ground of it that their condemnation of Him rested. It is idle to say that there was nothing blasphemous in claiming to be the Messiah, and that such a claim could not explain the action of the council; the council was not scrupulous, and this particular Messianic claim, made by this particular person, with such threatening assurance, might well seem to them the very kind of insolent impiety to which the name blasphemy belonged. It led in fact directly to His death.

In this self-assertion or self-revelation of Jesus there is in a sense nothing new. He has said substantially the same thing before (Mark 9^{1}, Matt. 16^{28}, Luke 9^{27}). It expresses indeed the consciousness in which He lived and died—the sense of Himself, and of His vocation and destiny by which the gospels are filled from beginning to end. All that is exhibited in the 110th Psalm ('Sit thou on My right hand')—all that is exhibited in the seventh chapter of Daniel ('the Son of Man,' 'coming with the clouds of heaven')—is to be fulfilled in Him. The sovereignty of God, which means the sovereignty of the human, as opposed to the brutal and unjust, is in Him to have its consummation. The form in which this is put has often proved disconcerting; Jesus, it is said, has not come with the clouds of heaven; and if He were under a delusion about this, can we trust His consciousness of Himself at all? Reference has been made above to the symbolical element in all such language—Daniel 7, for example, is symbolical throughout; but it is permissible here to refer to the fact that both Matthew and Luke give the words of Jesus with a certain qualification. Matthew (26^{64}) has: Henceforth (ἀπ' ἄρτι) ye shall see the Son of Man seated; and Luke (22^{69}), But from this time (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν) shall the Son of

Man be seated. These qualifications become important when we consider that Luke here represents a tradition which is independent of Mark, so that he is not modifying Mark's record, and that there is no probability that he knew anything of Matthew. They suggest that from a very early period, a period antecedent to all our evangelists, the words of Jesus were current in the Church in a form which requires a spiritual rather than a transcendent interpretation. It is no remote future to which Jesus appeals; the fulfilment of His words begins with the moment at which they are spoken. His enemies think they have expelled Him from the world, but from the very moment of their triumph His victory sets in. He filled Jerusalem from His death onward as He had never done in His life; it was impossible to escape His Presence or His Power; the Council had more to do with Him, was made more sensible of His predominance, found His challenge more inevitable, in the early days of Acts than in the period of the gospel history. Possibly it is in this line, which allows for the symbolical character of the words, rather than through a literal rendering of them, that the meaning of Jesus is to be sought. In any case He identifies Himself, in the last solemn utterance of His life, with the coming of the Kingdom of God; the coming of that kingdom means His own exaltation and return in glory; and however we may picture it—may we not say reverently, However, in the days of His flesh, *He* pictured it—the certainty of it is one to Him with His very being. In speaking as He speaks here, he puts Himself in the place which He holds throughout the New Testament; that place is given to Him only because He claims it as His own.

CONCLUSION

We have now completed our examination of the two questions with which we started. The first was: Has Christianity existed from the beginning only in the form of a faith which has Jesus as its object, and not at all in the form of a faith which has had Jesus simply as its living pattern? and the second: Can Christianity, as even the New Testament exhibits it, justify itself by appeal to Christ? To both questions the answer must be in the affirmative. The most careful scrutiny of the New Testament discloses no trace of a Christianity in which Jesus has any other place than that which is assigned Him in the faith of the historical Church. When the fullest allowance is made for the diversities of intellectual and even of moral interest which prevail in the different writers and the Christian societies which they address, there is one thing in which they are indistinguishable—the attitude of their souls to Christ. They all set Him in the same incomparable place. They all acknowledge to Him the same immeasurable debt. He determines, as no other does or can, all their relations to God and to each other. While His true manhood is unquestionably assumed, He is set as unquestionably on the side of reality which we call Divine and which confronts man; He embodies for faith that Divine love and power which work out man's salvation. It is the place thus assigned to Christ which gives its religious unity to the New Testament, and which has kept the Christian religion one all through its history. And so with regard

to the second question. When we look back from the Christian religion as the New Testament exhibits it, and as it is still exhibited in the Christian Church, to the historical Jesus, we see a Person, who is not only equal to the place which Christian faith assigns Him, but who assumes that place naturally and spontaneously as His own. Partly the inevitable ascendency which He exercised over those around Him, and the unspeakable obligations under which He laid them in their life toward God, evoked within them the sense of what was due to Jesus; but partly also Jesus revealed His consciousness of what He was, of what He was doing, and of what He claimed from men, in startling and unparalleled words. The resurrection of Jesus, and His consciousness of Himself as thus revealed, are at once the guarantee and justification of the historical Christian faith.

Before proceeding to what seem the inevitable inferences from this, it may be worth while to refer in passing to two objections which are sure to present themselves to some minds. On the one hand, there are those to whom the questions raised are in their very nature irksome; it seems to them absurd that religion, the higher life of the spirit, should be in any way entangled in such investigations, or dependent on their results. It must, they think, live upon immediate certainties of its own, be the answers what they may to questions of the kind we have been considering. This mental temper is widely diffused. It speaks, for example, in the broad distinction which is sometimes drawn between Faith and Knowledge. 'In Faith,' to quote Goethe as representing this view, 'everything depends on the fact of believing; *what* we believe is quite secondary. Faith is a profound sense of security, springing from confidence in the All-powerful, Inscrutable Being. The strength of this confidence is the main point. But *what* we think of this Being depends

on other faculties, or even on other circumstances, and is altogether indifferent.' What we are concerned with, however, is not faith indefinitely, faith as a profound sense of security springing from confidence in a Being of whom we know nothing, but faith in a specifically Christian sense—that is, faith with characteristics or qualities or virtues which are somehow due to Christ. It is idle to say that this is independent of what we know of Christ. It is Christ known who makes it what it is: we have Christian faith only as we believe in God through Him. The same criticism is applicable to the famous aphorism of Lessing, to which so many have appealed as a way of shaking off the spiritual bondage (as they think it) of subjection to history: 'accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason.' Christianity does not mean the recognition of necessary truths of reason, but an attitude of the soul to God, determined by Christ; and history is not to the religious man a chapter of accidents, but the stage on which a Divine purpose is achieved which could not be more ineptly described than by calling it accidental. Religion can no more be simplified by making it independent of history than respiration would be simplified by soaring beyond the atmosphere. What we have always to do, after making such distinctions as have been illustrated from Goethe and Lessing, is to transcend them. Our vital convictions, the faiths by which we live, are not formed *in vacuo;* they are generated in us by what has happened. If the past is eliminated from the present, the historical from the eternal, it is hard to say what is left. The historical realities which we have been considering—the Personality, the Self-consciousness, the Resurrection, the growing Ascendency of Jesus—are anything but 'contingent historical truths.' Whatever we mean when we speak of Divine necessity may be predicated of all. Al-

though Christianity is a historical religion, its saving truth is not only in the past; it is *here*, in the living Christ and in the experience of Christians. It has its foundation laid in historical facts, no doubt; but it has at the same time its witness in itself, for the consciences of sinful men, needing and seeking God. It is the combination of the historical fact in the past with its Divine meaning and relevance in the present, in which the whole weight of the evidence lies; and it is the testimony of believers, speaking in the power of the spirit, which is used by God to make the historical eternal—that is, to make it living, present, and divinely strong to save.

On the other hand, there are those who on critical grounds, or what they believe to be such, will demur to the answer we have given to the second of our two questions. That answer, they will hold, ascribes to our gospels a higher historical value than they possess. The real way to look at these documents is that which recognises that they mark stages in a process which began with Jesus, but which terminates in the prologue to the fourth gospel, or even in the Nicene Creed. This process, which we may call that of idealising Jesus, or representing Him in history as acting in the rôle which He fills in Christian faith, was not indeed completed when our gospels were written, but it had gone a considerable way. It had gone so far, in fact, that the historical Jesus is irrecoverably lost to us; we do not know what He was, we only know how those who believed in Him represented Him to their own minds. The plausibility of such statements depends entirely upon their generality, and as soon as we come to close quarters with Him it disappears. In investigating our second question we did not appeal to the gospels without criticism, but to the two oldest documentary sources which criticism has recognised—Mark, and a non-Marcan source used by

Matthew and Luke. These represent what was believed and taught of Jesus in the Christian Church during the sixties of the first century. This is a period at which many who knew Jesus must have survived, and there are sound reasons for believing that the two documents named were connected with two members of the apostolic circle—Mark being indirectly dependent on Peter, while the non-Marcan document was probably the work of Matthew. Even if we admit the process of idealising to be real, these are fair guarantees for a close connexion with history. But the process is often exaggerated and misconceived. If we start behind all the evidence, with an assumed Jesus who is exactly what other men are, of course there is an immense amount of idealising to be allowed for; everything in short, is idealising—that is, everything is imaginary and fictitious—by which Jesus is brought into a positive connexion with the Christian religion. Obviously this is an unsound mode of arguing. Jesus had unquestionably a positive connexion with the Christian religion. It owes its being to an impulse communicated by Him. But that impulse cannot have been alien to the phenomena which it generated; there must have been that in Jesus which was in some kind of keeping with the idealisation of Him in the Church's faith. To admit this, however, is to admit that the Jesus exactly like ourselves who is assumed to stand behind the gospel history, is an illegitimate assumption; if He had been no more than we are, the wonder of the Christian religion and of the New Testament would never have come to be. The necessity of maintaining continuity between Jesus and the movement which issued from Him, when taken in connexion with the closeness of the witnesses to the facts, creates a presumption in favour of the historical representation of the oldest sources which goes far to balance the idealising process referred to. Further,

as we have seen already, there is a self-guaranteeing power in the inner life of Jesus which assures us we are in contact with reality in the gospels; the spiritual truth is so unquestionable that it carries the conviction of historical truth along with it. The mind of Christ, as we have come in contact with it in those two ancient authorities, does not strike us at all as a product of idealising or theologising tendencies in the mind of the Church. We know what theology is, we know what poetry is, and the most significant utterances in which Jesus reveals Himself have not the character of either the one or the other. They are vital, individual, unparalleled. The more closely they are studied, the more apparent it becomes that they must be taken at their full value if we are to see what Jesus was and what place He claimed in the relations of God and man. It is well worth observing, too, in a matter in which some minds are sure to be impressed by authorities, that the two most recent and searching studies of this subject by independent scholars have been entirely favourable to the historical character of the gospel picture, and entirely unfavourable to the idea that Jesus has been idealised, or theologised, by the evangelists, past recognition. Weiss asserts that the matter contained in Q—and Q as he has reconstructed it contains a vastly greater proportion of the gospel story than we have appealed to—shows no trace whatever of being influenced by later Christological ideas; and in this he is substantially supported by Harnack. Harnack, indeed, thinks that Q represents Jesus as dominated by the sense of His Messiahship, from beginning to end of the gospel story, more strictly than the facts warrant; but the facts, as he himself expiscates them from Q's report of the words of Jesus, include these: that He who even in His present existence is more than a prophet and greater than John, He who is the Son, will be the future King and Judge.

If this was Jesus' consciousness of Himself, as we come into contact with it in history, there is clearly room to look for wonderful things without discounting them as idealising.[1] It is indeed not the formal testimonies, in which high titles are assigned to Him, which impress us most with the sense of what Jesus is. In one place or another these may be due to misapprehension, even though it is admitted that He sometimes used them. It is the informal utterance of His greatness which is so arresting and inevitable, and no scepticism can shake our conviction that never man spake as this man—about Himself. He stands alone, not only in the faith of His followers, but in His own apprehension of what He is to God and man.

It is hardly possible to appreciate these conclusions unless we try to show their bearing on the religious conditions of the present. No one will deny that there is much confusion both within the Church and outside of it as to what the Christian religion essentially is. Nor is it only evangelic Churches that labour under such perplexities. As recent events have shown, even the Church of Rome, with all the emphasis it lays upon the principles of tradition and authority, is as sorely embarrassed as to the proper way of dealing with its modernist members, as any of the Protestant communions. Such an inquiry as we have just concluded ought to provide both the Churches and seeking souls outside the Churches with principles to steady themselves by in the present distress.

[1] B. Weiss, *Die Quellen der synoptischen Ueberliejerung*, 89. Ein Einfluss späterer christologischer Vorstellungen auf die Stoffe in Q ist in keiner Weise nachzuweisen. So also, in speaking of what he regards as an independent source—which he calls L—and which runs through Luke from beginning to end, he says: Auch die Lukasquelle geht nirgends ueber die urchristliche Auffassung von der Person Jesu hinaus *ib.* 80; and of Luke as a whole: Die Hauptsache ist, dass von einer irgendwie höher entwickelten Christologie im Lukasevangelium nicht die Rede sein kann. Cf. Harnack, *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu*, 169.

On the one hand, the conclusions which we have reached are entirely reassuring to those who stand in the line of historical Christianity. Speaking of it, not as a theological system, but as a religious life, Christianity has always given to Jesus a supreme place in its faith. Christians have lived a life, or have aimed at least to live a life, in which all their relations both to God and man were determined by Christ. They owed to Him all that made their religion what it was: the knowledge of the Father, the forgiveness of their sins, the new life in the spirit, the assurance of immortality. Their faith in God was in the proper sense Christian faith, because it was in the first instance faith in Him. Now this is the conception of Christianity which our investigation of the New Testament has also discovered, and it is a conception which is vindicated when we look to Christ Himself as the oldest records disclose Him. Those who live in the faith which has just been described live in the line of New Testament Christianity, and of the mind of Christ about His own place in the relations of men and God. They have the same religion as those whose spiritual life is reflected in the New Testament. Their attitude to Christ is the same, and so is their attitude to God through Christ. This is the point at which evangelical Christianity is right, and at which all its protests against a broad churchism which would give Christ another or a lower place than He has in the New Testament faith are justified. It is the point at which evangelical Christianity even in the Church of Rome is justified in refusing to negotiate with a modernism which by assuming that Christ cannot possibly have been anything but what we are makes the ascription to Him of His supreme place in faith impossible. There can be no Christianity at all, in the only sense in which Christianity can be seen in the New Testament, in the only sense in which it is a

religion answering to the mind of Christ about His own place and calling, unless Christ is established in the place which the faith of the Church has always given Him. He must have His place because He claims it and because it is His due.

But there is more than this to say. What Christ claims and what is His due is a place in the faith of men —in other words, it is an attitude of the soul to Himself as He is presented to us in the gospel. We are bound to Him, in that wonderful significance which He has for the life of the soul, that unique and incommunicable power which He has to determine all our relations to God and man. To be true Christians, we are thus bound to Him; but we are not bound to anything else. But for what He is and for what He has done, we could not be Christians at all: but for our recognition of what He is, but for our acceptance of what He has done, and our sense of infinite obligation to Him as we realise the cost at which He has done it, we could not tell what Christianity means. But we are not bound to any man's or to any church's rendering of what He is or has done. We are not bound to any Christology, or to any doctrine of the work of Christ. No intellectual construction of what Christ's presence and work in the world mean is to be imposed beforehand as a law upon faith, or a condition of membership in the Church. It is faith which makes a Christian; and when the Christian attitude of the soul to Christ is found, it must be free to raise its own problems and to work out its own solutions. This is the point at which 'broad' churchism is in the right against an evangelical Christianity which has not learned to distinguish between its faith—in which it is unassailable —and inherited forms of doctrine which have been unreflectingly identified with it. Natural as such identification may be, and painful as it may be to separate

in thought things which have coalesced in strong and sacred feelings, there is nothing more certain than that the distinction must be recognised if evangelical Christians are to maintain their intellectual integrity, and preach the gospel in a world which is intellectually free. We are bound to Christ, and would see all men so bound; but we must leave it to Christ to establish His ascendency over men in His own way—by the power of what He is and of what He has done—and not seek to secure it beforehand by the imposition of chains of our forging.

It is one of the most urgent needs of the Church at the present moment to have both these truths recognised in their full extent. There can be no Christianity to maintain if the evangelical truth is not asserted that Christ must have in the faith of men no less or lower place than He has had from the beginning, or than He Himself, as we have seen, deliberately assumed; but there can be no hope of appealing to the world in which we live to give Christ such a place in its faith if we identify doing so with the acceptance beforehand of the inherited theology or Christology of the Church. This is not said with any indifference to theology or Christology, with any feeling that Christ and His place in the world, and especially in the relations of God and man, are not worth thinking about. On the contrary, there is nothing which is so much worth thinking about, nor so certain to stimulate thought if only thought is left free. Nor is it said on the other hand with any indifference to the place of Christ: that is assumed to be indisputable from the outset. The problem is to find a way of securing the two things: unreserved recognition of the place which Christ has always held in evangelical faith, and entire intellectual freedom in thinking out what this implies. There is no necessary inconsistency in the combination; it has been realised in every orig-

inal Christian thinker, and the true teachers of the Church are one prolonged illustration of it. Not only great theologians, but great evangelists like Zinzendorf and Wesley have explicitly recognised it. To refer to the former. He was, says his biographer, indifferent to many things to which the theologians of his time attached supreme importance; for he believed that all who love the Saviour meet in a spiritual unity raised infinitely above the barriers erected between the different Churches by differences of rite and tradition; and even by their errors. 'Although,' he wrote, 'I am and mean to remain a member of the evangelical (*i.e.* the Lutheran) Church, nevertheless I do not bind Christ and His truth to any sect; whoever believes that he is saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus by living faith, that is to say, whoever seeks and finds in Christ wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, is my brother; and for what remains, I regard it as an unprofitable task, or as rather injurious than profitable, to examine what his opinions are, or what his exegesis. In this sense,' he goes on, 'I admit that it makes no difference to me that a man is heterodox—but in this sense only.'[1] Similar passages might be multiplied from Wesley. In his Journal, under date May 18, 1788, he says: 'I subjoined (to his sermon on "Now abideth faith, hope, love; these three") a short account of Methodism, particularly insisting on the circumstances—There is no other religious society under heaven which requires nothing of men in order to their admission into it but a desire to save their souls. Look all around you, you cannot be admitted into the Church (*i.e.* the Church of England), or society of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opin-

[1] F. Bovet, *Le Comte de Zinzendorf*, 146. The passage quoted is from a letter of Zinzendorf, dated June 20, 1729.

ions with them, and adhere to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion; but they think and let think.' No one will suspect Wesley of indifference to the place which Christ must have in Christian faith, but he was as clear as Zinzendorf that this place was one thing, and that the theological explanations of it or deductions from it were another. It is this distinction between soundness in faith—a genuinely Christian attitude of the soul to Christ, in virtue of which Christ determines the spiritual life throughout—and soundness in doctrine—the acceptance of some established intellectual construction of faith, on which emphasis needs to be laid. Soundness in faith is that on which Christianity and the Church depend for their very being; but the construction of Christian doctrine is one of the tasks at which Christian intelligence must freely labour, respecting, no doubt, but never bound by, the efforts or attainments of the past.

This, it may be said, is generally admitted, and in one sense this is true. It is admitted by individuals. The vast majority of the members of the evangelical churches occupy practically the position described. They are loyal to Christ: their attitude to Him is essentially the New Testament attitude; they acknowledge that in their spiritual life it is His to determine everything, and that they are infinitely and for ever His debtors. But to a large extent, and to an extent which increases as the mind realises its independence in other regions, and cherishes ideals of what science and freedom mean, they have lost interest in the traditional theology. It is not that they actively disapprove of it or dissent from it, but they do not think of it. It is not their own, and they have a dim or a clear conviction that anything of this kind, if it is to have interest or value for them, must be their own. It must be their own faith which inspires it, the action of

their own minds which is embodied in it. It cannot be simply lifted, as an inheritance, or submitted to, as a law; it must be the free and spontaneous product of an intelligence energised by faith in Christ. Individual Christians understand this, and that is why they sometimes seem so indifferent to doctrine. Preachers understand it, and try to present to their hearers not doctrines about Christ, but Christ Himself—not doctrines about Christ, for doctrine always challenges scepticism, and scepticism the more searching in proportion as its claim to authority is high, but Christ Himself, the sight of whom is the supreme appeal and motive to faith. But though individual Christians, and not only those who listen to the gospel but those who preach it, are conscious of this distinction and accept its consequences, the Churches can hardly be said to have done so. They are Christian organisations, yet they seem to be based on doctrinal statements which most of their members have realised are not the actual or the proper basis of Christian life; and they not only find it difficult to conceive any other basis, but seem to suspect those who speak of another of striking at the very heart of the faith. This want of accord between the intellectual attitude of the Churches acting collectively, and that of their individual members, is the cause not only of much discomfort and misunderstanding within, but of much scandal and reproach without. It seriously discredits the Church in the eyes of the world to which it wishes to appeal, and it is urgent to ask whether there is any remedy for it.

The responsibilities of a society, it must be frankly admitted, are other than those of its individual members. It is inevitably more conservative than they; it has to guard in some sense what the labours of the past have won, and not allow the historical inheritance to be repudiated or cast away by the juvenile petulance of those

who know neither what it means nor what it has cost. Christian thought has been at work for centuries on the object and the experiences of Christian faith, and it would be more than strange if all its toil had been in vain. There is a just and proper jealousy of an attitude to the past which virtually denies to it the presence and the providence of God, and assumes that where it is concerned we have everything to teach and nothing to learn. This is not at all the attitude which we advocate when we urge that the intelligence of the Church in the present must be allowed free play. It is the denial of this freedom which more than anything else makes men unjust to the past. Nothing creates a stronger prejudice against a creed, especially if it is of any high degree of elaboration, than the necessity of signing it as a condition of membership or of ministry in the Church. The main fact about it in those circumstances—that which weighs most upon the mind—is that it is imposed as a law upon faith; and the feelings which this infallibly engenders are those of resentment and suspicion. It is not paradoxical, but the simple truth, to say that the influence of documents like the Westminster Confession, for example, or even the Thirty-Nine Articles, in the Churches which require their office-bearers to sign them, would not only be more legitimate but indefinitely greater if subscription were abolished. Men would then apply themselves freely to these historical expositions of Christianity with minds willing to be helped, not in a suspicious temper, or in the attitude of self-defence; they would value them more highly and learn far more from them; they would not be tempted to strain them into meaning what they were not intended to mean, so as to make subscription less of a burden to conscience. To say this is not to accuse the mind of childishness; it is only to recognise facts which every day's experience confirms.

In spite, however, of all their responsibilities and obligations to the past—in spite of the duty incumbent on them to conserve its intellectual as well as its moral attainments—the pressure put upon the Churches, both from without and from within, to recognise the claims of intellectual liberty, is rapidly becoming irresistible. Christian people, who are consciously at one in their attitude to Christ and in their sense of obligation to Him, see that they are kept in different communions, and incapacitated from co-operation in work and worship, because they have inherited different theological traditions to which they are assumed to be bound. Without entering into any discussion of what these theological traditions—call them creeds, confessions, testimonies, or whatever else—are worth, they feel in their souls that they are not bound to them, and ought not to be, with the same kind of bond which secures their allegiance to Christ. For the sake of getting nearer to those who share this allegiance, and co-operating with them in the service of the Lord who holds their hearts, they contemplate with more than equanimity the slackening or dissolution of the bonds which attach them to the theology, or, if we prefer to call it so, the Christian thought of the past. They will think for themselves as they can or must, but the primary necessity, if not the one thing needful, is the Christian attitude of the soul to Christ, and union with all who make that attitude their own. Internal pressure of this kind is reinforced from without. In every country in Christendom the nation has outgrown the Church, or has to a large extent passed from beneath its influence. Even of those who retain connexion with it, frequenting its worship and formally supporting it before the world, vast numbers are mentally in that strained relation to it which has just been described. It is not necessary to diagnose too narrowly the causes

which have led to the estrangement from the Church of such masses of those who once found in it a spiritual home, and still less to suppose that they all lie in the region with which we are dealing; but it is certain that readjustments must be made here before those who have been alienated can be won again. It is certain also that before Christians can combine to face with effect the problems presented by society to the spirit of Christ they must overcome somehow the forces which perpetuate division among themselves. The important question is whether they can find the true principle of union. If the conclusions which we have reached are sound, it must be a principle which will secure the two ends we have now before us—that is, which will bind men to the Christian attitude to Christ, but which will leave them, thus bound, free to assume and discharge their intellectual and moral responsibilities with a conscience acknowledging no authority but that of the God in whom they believe through Him.

It is very natural that the first steps toward the recognition of such a principle should be hesitating and uncertain. Churches which have inherited complex and elaborate creeds—creeds which, though they may be called confessions of faith, are not really confessions of faith, but more or less complete systems of theology—are apt to think that it is in the complexity and elaboration of their confessions that the difficulty lies. Their first thought is that what we need for union among Christians is the reduction or simplification of our elaborate creeds. Why, for example, it is asked, should we cling to the Westminster Confession, a document containing hundreds of sharply-defined propositions, about many of which there is no prospect of Christians ever agreeing? Why should we not recognise that it is hopeless to expect union on this basis, and go back to a sub-

lime and simple formula like the creed of Nicæa? Would not all Christians gather round that? This has not only been ventilated as a possibility, but has been definitely proposed as the doctrinal basis of union between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians of Australia.

Plausible as this may sound, it is plausible only to those who have never appreciated the nature of the difficulty which has to be dealt with. What we want as a basis of union is not something simpler, of the same kind as the creeds and confessions in our hands; it is something of a radically different kind. To simplify merely by going back from the seventeenth century to the fourth is certainly an easy matter, but what a contemptuous censure it passes on the Christian thought of the centuries between. When a man speaks of giving up the Westminster Confession for the Nicene Creed, one can only think that he has no true appreciation of either. The Westminster Confession contains everything that is in the Nicene Creed, but the writer has no hesitation in saying that this is the least valuable part of what it contains, and that which has least prospect of permanence. The valuable parts of the Confession, those which still appeal to the Christian conscience and awaken a response in it, are the new parts—those which represent the gains of the Reformation revival and the insight into Christian truth acquired there; they are the parts which treat of the work of Christ and its consequences—of justification, adoption, and sanctification; of saving faith and repentance unto life; of Christian liberty and liberty of conscience; of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God, as the supreme means of grace. To simplify the creed by omitting everything which can be verified in experience, and then to expect men to unite in the purely metaphysical proposition —for whatever religious interest it is supposed to guard, it is a purely metaphysical proposition—that Christ is con-

substantial with the Father, is only to show that one has not diagnosed the situation at all. Very few people can tell what Athanasius and the Nicene bishops meant by this term. No one knows whether all who use it now use it in precisely the same sense; or rather, it is as certain as anything can be that they do not. Every one feels that it is on something else than the understanding of such metaphysical propositions that the life and union of Christians depend; and it is this something else, and not what any one regards as its metaphysical basis or presupposition, which ought to find expression in the common Christian confession of faith. It is their attitude to Christ which Christians have to declare, and Christ can only be described in their confession in the character which justifies that attitude. He can only be described in the simple language of religion. What for theology or metaphysics is involved in this is a proper subject for theological or metaphysical study; but it ought not to have a place, and if Christians are ever to unite it will not have a place, in the confession of faith in which they declare the attitude of their souls to Him.

But, it may be said, is it possible to separate in this way the Christian attitude to Christ from definite beliefs and convictions about Him? Did not He Himself raise the question of Christology when He said to His disciples, 'Whom say ye that I am?' When we ask men to believe in Him, must we not be able to tell them things about Him which demand or justify the faith for which we appeal? When they ask who then the Person is for whom so incomparable a place is claimed, must we not be able to tell them in direct and express terms? And in particular, it may be said, how is the work of Christian education to be carried on? How are the immature members of a Christian community to be reared in Christian intelligence if there is not

some doctrinal system on the basis of which they can be catechised?

All these are fair questions, and no one could be less disposed than the writer to dispute their fairness. What they rest upon, in the last resort, is the feeling that the Christian attitude to Christ, and a certain type of convictions about Christ, are not unrelated to each other. There can be no such thing as a final schism in human nature, no possibility of permanently opposing faith and knowledge, or of permanently playing off the one against the other. The Christian attitude to Christ, and the Christian experiences into which men are initiated by it, must, in proportion as they are truly apprehended in the mind, lead to a body of Christian convictions, or a system of Christian doctrine, in which believing men will find themselves at one. This is not questioned in the least. What is at issue is rather a question of order than of antagonism: our concern is to see that we lay at the foundation only what is fundamental, and that we do not present to men as the indispensable presupposition of faith what is one of faith's last and most difficult achievements. When we preach, we must certainly be able to tell men things about Christ which justify the Christian attitude to Him. But these faith-producing things are not dogmatic definitions of His person: they are not doctrinal propositions, such as those of the Nicene Creed; nor are they less formal expressions of essentially the same character. They are such things as we have been in contact with all through our study of the gospels: they are the life, the mind, the death, the resurrection of Jesus. If the exhibition of these does not evoke the Christian attitude of the soul to Him, the soundest metaphysical doctrine of His person is worthless. But if the Christian attitude is evoked by the revelation of Jesus in the gospel, we have found that in which all Christians can unite, and the

theological doctrine of His person may be trusted sooner or later to come to its rights. But it must not be taken out of its proper place and order, nor can we expect it to yield us what can only be found in the sphere of faith. The questions raised by the Christian attitude to Jesus, and the Christian's sense of debt to Him, may have to be asked over and over, taking always a wider range, penetrating always more deeply into the wonder of what He is and does; and with the widening and deepening of the questions the answers too must vary in form. That is why we cannot look to these answers, however profound or true they may be, to furnish the basis of union among Christians. They are always subject to revision, not because He changes—He is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever—but because men change in their apprehension of Him. And in such changes, even though they may sometimes be changed to an inferior or less adequate conception of Him, we must bear with each other so long as the attitude of Christian faith in Him is maintained.

If we look to the Church of the New Testament age, we shall find that this is essentially the situation in which it confronts us. As has been demonstrated above, there is one religion exhibited in every part of the New Testament; from beginning to end, in every writer represented in it, there is the same attitude of the soul to Christ. In other words, there is one faith. But though there is one faith, there is not one Christology. All the New Testament writers, it may no doubt be said, have a Christology of some kind. Faith always acts as an intellectual stimulus, and it never did so more irresistibly than in the first generation. When Christ constrained men to assume what we have called the Christian attitude to Himself, He constrained them at the same time to ask who the Person was to whom such an attitude was due. He constrained them to think what His relations must be to God and

man, and even to the universe at large, to justify the attitude He assumed to them. But though these questions stirred more or less powerfully, as they must always do, the intelligence of Christians, it is impossible for any scientific student of the New Testament to say that all the early believers, or even all who were regarded in the Church as divinely empowered witnesses to the gospel, answered them in precisely the same way. To take only one example, but that the most conspicuous: Paul's attitude to Christ is exactly that of other New Testament writers, but his Christology is his own. It is not identical with that of Peter or John, or, so far as we can discover it, with that of Matthew or Luke; just as little is it identical with that of the Nicene Creed. It does not follow from this that it is of no value, or of no authority. The great thoughts about Christ inspired by Christian faith in Him, as the New Testament illustrates it—thoughts about His relations to God, to men, and to the universe—always tend to reproduce themselves in minds which share that faith; and it must be a singularly powerful or solitary mind which in its Christian thoughts about Christ could own no debt to Paul. This is the guarantee we have, in a world in which the mind is once for all free, that the truth in Paul's thoughts about Christ will never be lost. But though it does not follow from what has been said that Paul's Christology is of no value, or has no authority for us, it does follow that neither his nor any other Christology can be the basis of union among Christians of which the Churches are in quest. It was not Christology in any sense in which Christians were one from the beginning, and the *Formula Concordiae* which the perplexed conscience of multitudes in all the Churches is at present seeking, cannot be a theological document. It must, we repeat, be a declaration which will bind men to Christ as believers have been bound from the beginning,

but which will also leave them in possession of the birthright of New Testament Christians—the right and the power of applying their own minds, with conscientious freedom, to search out the truth of what Jesus is and does, and to read all things in the light of it—the world and God, nature and history, the present and the future of man.

Reserving, then, this right and power, it only remains to ask whether we can put the religious truth about Jesus, the significance which He has for the faith of Christians, into words which all who adopt the Christian attitude to Him would recognise as the expression of their faith. Such words would not be doctrinal or dogmatic, in the sense of the Nicene Creed, or of the Augsburg or the Westminster Confession; they would not be an utterance the same in kind, but simpler in form, and less ambitious in aim; they would be the immediate utterance of the Christian sense of what faith has in Christ, not the speculative or reflective statement—as these other documents all are in varying degrees—of metaphysical truths concerning Christ which must be admitted if we would justify our faith. The truth they embody would not be itself a creed, in the sense of a scientific or theologically defined statement; it would not be the substitute for a creed; it would be the inspiration and the standard of all Christian thinking. Looking back to the investigations which we have just completed, and recalling the significance which Jesus had in His own mind, and has always had in the minds of Christians, it is perhaps not too bold to suggest that the symbol of the Church's unity might be expressed thus: I believe in God through Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord and Saviour.

A few words will explain everything in this which requires explanation. The ultimate object of faith is always God, but Christian faith in God is faith which is determined by Christ, and which would not in any re-

spect be what it is but for Him. Hence in the most elementary Christian confession, faith in God must be so described as to bring out this specific character. It must be defined as faith in God through Christ. But how is the Person to be described who is the mediator of this characteristically Christian faith? If we keep vividly before us that estimate of Him which pervades the New Testament writings, and which, as we have seen, can be vindicated by appeal to His own consciousness of Himself, we shall probably agree that this description must cover or include two things: first, that the Person concerned is to God what no other can be; and second, that He is also what no other can be to man. The first of these is secured when He is described as the only Son of God. We need not hesitate to admit that when we speak of God the only terms we can use are symbolic or analogical. If the analogies suggested are real, the terms are true and valuable. 'Son of God' in ancient times was used with great latitude of meaning, both by Jews and Gentiles; but what it conveys here is that Jesus' consciousness of God was truly filial. God was to Him Father, and He was to God Son. When we describe Him as the only Son of God, what is signified is that in that filial consciousness He stands alone in the world. He is not, as He conceives Himself and as Christian faith recognises Him, a son of God, but the Son. He is the Son in the same unqualified sense in which God is the Father, and when believers are initiated into the filial relation to God, it is in and through Him. No metaphysical solution or explanation is offered of the fact that Christ is to God what no other is or can be; the fact is simply declared—and if the Christianity of the New Testament and of the consciousness of Jesus is to survive it must be declared—when he is called God's only Son. The term *only* is the simplest, but an entirely adequate, translation

of the *unicus* and μονογενὴς of the Latin and Greek creeds. The second requisite in the description of Christ—that He shall be presented as being to men what no other is or can be—is secured when He is further designated our Lord and Saviour. The first term expresses the unique allegiance and loyalty which all Christians acknowledge to Christ; the second, the unique debt which they owe Him. Taking both together, and in combination with the description of Jesus as the only Son of God, it is not too much to say that they safeguard everything which is vital to New Testament Christianity, that they include everything which ought to have a place in a fundamental confession of faith, and that they are the only basis of union broad enough and solid enough for all Christians to meet upon.

The objections which will immediately arise here in many minds are mainly due to prepossessions or assumptions which reflection will lead us to discount. It may be worth while to refer to some of the chief.

It will certainly be urged, to begin with, that no Christian confession of faith can omit mention of the Holy Spirit. Believers have been baptized from the earliest days in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Especially, it may be said, if the union of Christians is in view, must we remember that it is dependent upon the Spirit; there is one Body only because there is one Spirit; and it is the unity of the Spirit which the New Testament exhorts us to maintain. The facts alleged here are not disputed, and nothing can be further from the writer's mind than to minimise their importance. Once again it is a question not of antagonism, but of order. It is surely much in favour of the type of confession advocated above that the New Testament nowhere speaks of faith in the Holy Spirit. The apostles preach Christ, and call on men to believe on Him; those who respond

to the call confess Christ in the character in which He is preached, the only Son of God, the Lord and Saviour; they believe in Him, and in God through Him; but familiar as it is to us through the accepted creeds of the Church, such an expression as 'I believe in the Holy Ghost' is entirely foreign to the New Testament. What the apostles asked was not, *Do you believe* in the Holy Spirit? but, *Did you receive* the Holy Spirit when you believed—believed, that is, in Jesus? (Acts 19^2). It is better, in thinking of what is essential to a Christian confession, to keep to New Testament lines. The Spirit will have its proper place in the interpretation of Christian experience; but to introduce the bare term into the primary confession, and to present the Spirit as an object of faith co-ordinate with Christ, is both to desert the New Testament, and to beguile ourselves with an illusion of knowledge about the divine nature which has no Christian value. As long as the experiences which come to men by believing in God through Christ are what they have been, the explanation of them from the divine side, as wrought by the Spirit of God, will find its due; but apart from this explanation, which surely has no proper place in the creed, there is no call to allude to the Spirit.

It is no unimportant confirmation of this view that the historical creeds of Christendom all betray a certain degree of embarrassment in their treatment of the article on the Spirit which they nevertheless agree to introduce. The most ancient, the 'Apostles'' Creed, has definite affirmations to make about the Father and the Son, but when it comes to the Spirit it has not a word to add. The Nicene Creed had originally the same form at this point: it ended with the words, 'and in the Holy Ghost.' The Constantinople text, which dates from 381, ventures on expansion: '(I believe) in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceedeth from the Father [and

the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets.' The haphazard and incongruous character of these additions needs no comment. In reality, the proper expansion of the article on the Spirit—that in which the meaning of 'the Spirit' is discovered—is to be found in the latter clauses of the Apostles' Creed: it is in the existence of the Church as the fellowship of believers, in the consciousness of forgiveness and in the assurance of immortality, that the Spirit is *real*, an object of knowledge and experience to believers: apart from these experiences, we could not even know there was any such thing. Even one who has every disposition to make the most of traditional Christian thinking, and who heartily agrees that no one knows all that a Christian means by 'God' unless he includes in the term all that is meant by 'Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,' may on grounds like these be convinced that every Christian interest is secured by the simple confession suggested above. And what is also of much importance, the one thing needful, the Christian attitude to Christ, is not compromised by being set on the same level with something which has not primarily the same character at all.

Another objection, not quite unlike this in principle, is that the confession proposed is too indefinite. Almost any one, it will be said, might adopt it. It could be made by an Arian as well as by an Athanasian. No one who has assented in any degree to the argument of this book will be puzzled by this objection. The confession which is here advocated as a sufficient basis for the unity of the Church could not be made by any one; it could only be made by those who take up what the most careful investigation has shown us to be the Christian attitude to Christ, and it can be no part of our intention to exclude any such from the Church. The differences which we associate

with the names Arian and Athanasian are differences which emerge in another region than that in which we confess our faith in Christ—in an ulterior region; and *all* such differences, where the Christian attitude to Christ is maintained in the sense which we have already made clear, must be dealt with by other means than excommunication. Arianism and Athanasianism both give answers to a question which multitudes of genuine Christians never ask. Once it is asked, the mind must be allowed to find the answer to it freely. One may be convinced, as the writer is, that the Arian answer is quite unreal, and as convinced that the Athanasian answer explains nothing. It is not on the answer at all that a man's Christianity depends, but on something antecedent even to the question; and it is this antecedent something—the believing Christian attitude to Christ, and the sense of Christ's unique place as determining all our relations to God—it is this, and not the metaphysics of Christ's Person, which alone is entitled to a place in the creed. If we wait for unity in the Church till all Christians accept the same Christology, we may as well give up the thought of unity at once.

Many minds will regard it as a more serious objection to the proposed confession that it ignores much which it has been customary to identify with Christianity, and which they would be inclined to affirm with emphasis just because it is so often called in question.

Thus it makes no mention of the supernatural birth of Christ: it has nothing corresponding to the clause in the Apostles' Creed, 'conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.' The answer to this would be on the same line as that to the objection that there is no separate mention of the Spirit. It is not intended at all to dispute the Virgin birth. Everything that we have seen of Christ in the course of our study, every impres-

sion that has been made on us of His solitary greatness and of His unique relations to God and man, is congruous with a unique presence and operation of God at His entrance into the world, and adds to its credibility. No purely historical evidence will ever make the supernatural birth of Christ credible except to a mind which has already, on independent grounds, surrendered to the impression of the supernatural in His Person. No one can deny that it is possible so to surrender. All through the earliest records, as we have seen, Christ reveals Himself to men, by word and deed and influence, in that character and greatness which demand and evoke faith; He reveals Himself as the only Son of God, the Lord and Saviour of men, and wins recognition and devotion in that character; but He does so without making the faintest allusion anywhere to the manner in which He came into the world. It is easy to find reasons why He should not have done so, even assuming that the gospel narratives of His birth are true; but that does not alter the fact that without disclosing the secret of His origin at all Jesus sought and found faith from men. It was the same after He left the world. As has been pointed out above (p. 14), the gospel rested on the apostolic testimony to Jesus, and the testimony did not reach so far back as His birth. It covered only the period within which Jesus was manifested to Israel—'beginning from the baptism of John until the day when He was taken up' (Acts 1^{22}). We cannot go wrong if we limit the fundamental confession of faith to the character in which Jesus presented Himself and was afterwards by His apostles presented to the world, without introducing into it, as essential conditions or presuppositions of faith, matters of fact which originally had no such significance. The question which Jesus asks, and which is of vital importance, is Who say ye that I am? not, How think ye that I came

to be? No doubt the two questions must be related somehow, but happily it is possible to answer the first, by assuming the Christian attitude to Christ, while the other remains in abeyance; and all that is urged here is that this ought to be recognised in the confession of the Church.

Other two objections, which would be serious if they were well founded, must also be referred to. The first is, that no mention is made of Christ's resurrection. This is a misunderstanding. Christ's resurrection is assumed when we confess our faith in Him as Lord. We do not believe, in the sense of having religious faith, except in a living person, and the term Lord expresses our assurance that the Person in whom we believe not only lives but reigns. This does not answer every question raised by the resurrection; indeed there may be many questions in this region which it is beyond our power to answer. We may never be able to define the relation of the crucified body of Jesus to the body of His glory, to picture the process by which the one was transformed into the other, to rationalise the relations of the two modes of being. We may never even be able to estimate with precision the meaning or the value of the New Testament evidence at any given point. But the soul which believes in the exaltation of Jesus as Lord can safely be left to the free and reverent exercise of intelligence on such points.

The other objection, which would be equally serious if it were true, is that no mention is made of the atonement. If by the atonement is meant the doctrine that there is a peculiar connexion between the death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins, then it may be noted that in this respect the brief confession of faith which we have in view is at one with the so-called œcumenical creeds. There is no mention of the atonement either

in the Apostles' Creed or in that of Nicaea. But the objection really rests on a misapprehension. When we confess our faith in Christ as Saviour, it can only mean that we owe to Him our reconciliation to God, the forgiveness of sins, the power of a life like His own. But these are the very things with which the doctrine of atonement deals. It is an attempt to understand how Christ achieves these blessed results for us—what He does and suffers, and why it is necessary that He should do and suffer so wonderfully to achieve such results. It is an attempt to understand the cost of our salvation to Christ, and to God in Christ. In so far as that is summarily comprehended in His death it is an attempt to understand the death of Christ as something determined by and doing justice to all the relations of God and man as these had been affected by sin. It is the central doctrine of Christianity, the deepest, the most vital, the most difficult; but it is raised by the believer's experience; it is not, as a developed doctrine, the condition of his faith. No doubt, when we think things together, a certain experience of salvation will lead to a certain construction of the work of Christ; but everything in its own order. The Christian consciousness of being indebted to Christ for salvation—of owing Him what we can never repay—must find a place in every confession of faith; and it does so when we call Him Saviour. The more we realise what it cost Him to save, the stronger will be the appeal we can make for faith; great evangelists like Paul and Luther, Zinzendorf and Wesley, magnified the atonement as the very heart of the gospel, and delivered it to sinners 'first of all.' But every Christian interest is secured by a confession which ascribes to Christ and to Christ alone the salvation of men. What it cost Him to save can be celebrated in doxologies, declared in preaching the gos-

pel, explored by devout Christian philosophy; in the Creed it is sufficient to describe Him as our Lord and Saviour.

In all this, it is needless to say, there is no idea of rediscovering the gospel, or of disparaging theology. But the state of mind around us, both within the Church and without, seemed to make it necessary to point out the bearing upon present conditions of the conclusions to which our investigations led. The Christian religion has never existed except as a religion giving Christ a place which is all His own in its faith; it has never existed except as a religion in which Christ was both to God and to man what no other could be, and determined all their mutual relations. Moreover, Christianity in this form is not discredited but vindicated when we test it by appeal to the consciousness of Christ. It only gives Him the place which He assumes as His own. It is the same religion, consistent with itself and with the consciousness of Jesus, all through the ages; and what we need for that mutual understanding of Christians, which is itself so urgent in view of the present distress, intellectual and spiritual as well as material, is the clear perception of this truth, and of its necessary consequences. We can all have, with a clear intellectual conscience, the same religion—the religion preached by the apostles, and answering to the self-consciousness of Jesus—the religion in which Jesus holds the place He has held from the beginning, the only place He ever consented to hold—the religion in which we recognise Him as the only Son of God, our Lord and Saviour: we can all have the same religion—provided that the intellectual questions it raises are left for the free consideration of Christian intelligence. We cannot lift the answers to these questions, ready made, from any source; not even from the New Testament. The mind which asks them is the only one that can answer them; and if it cannot answer them for itself, they remain for it

unanswerable. This does not mean that one mind cannot help another, but that every mind is independent, and can only be helped by what recognises and confirms its independence. The thoughts of the apostles, whose minds were first powerfully stimulated by their faith in Christ, will always be a help, and the supreme help, to Christian thought; in some sense they will always be a standard for Christian thinking; but they help us by inspiring in us an intellectual interest in the gospel answering to their own, not by imposing their thoughts authoritatively upon us as a law to our faith. There is no reason to fear that the frank recognition of this—with its corollary, the abolition of subscription to theological creeds, such as now prevails in most churches—would imperil the gospel, or any Christian interest. On the contrary, it would concentrate interest where it ought to be concentrated. It would keep the religious significance and claims of Christianity in the forefront, and these, though in no sense opposed to, are nevertheless distinct from, its theological presuppositions or problems. A church, it may be said, must always have some security that those whom it puts in places of responsibility—those, especially, whom it entrusts with the duty of teaching, or of representing its convictions before the world—are really in essentials at one with it. This is true enough, but the essentials, as we have tried to show, are covered by such a non-theological confession of faith as has just been proposed. It is not the signing of a creed which keeps men true to their religion, but something quite different. The men who drew up the confessions which we sign could not themselves sign them before they were drawn up. The Church which set them to their task might properly ask them to declare their loyalty to the common faith; but this done, they had no further responsibility to men. 'I, *A. B.*' —so each of the Westminster divines gave his hand as he

joined the Assembly which drew up the Westminster Confession—'do seriously promise and vow, in the presence of Almighty God, that in this assembly whereof I am a member, I will maintain nothing in point of doctrine but what I believe to be most agreeable to the word of God; nor in point of discipline, but what may make most for God's glory, and the peace and good of this Church.' A solemn pledge of this kind, added to such an unreserved recognition of Christ's place in the relations of God and man as has been the characteristic of Christian faith from the beginning, and as is covered by the form suggested above, is surely all that any Church can wisely ask from its ministers. To adopt this course would do more than anything to meet the intellectual crisis in the Churches. It would bring an immense moral relief to many who are in the Church. It would remove obstacles which keep many outside of it. It would restore its self-respect and its honour in the eyes of the world. It would provide the only reasonable intellectual basis for union. And it would not imperil the Christian relation to Christ. Faith lives on in the world because Christ is perpetually revealed in the character and greatness which originally commanded it. We believe in Him as Son of God, as Lord and Saviour, because it is so only that He manifests Himself to us, and the consciousness that our faith raises numberless questions which we may never be able to answer does not shake its security or diminish its power. It is not open or unanswered questions that paralyse; it is ambiguous or evasive answers, or answers of which we can make no use, because we cannot make them our own. And it is not the acceptance of any theology or Christology, however penetrating or profound, which keeps us Christian; we remain loyal to our Lord and Saviour only because He has apprehended us, and His hand is strong.

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